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PUBLIC EDUCATION IN DELAWARE

A REPORT TO THE
PUBLIC SCHOOL COMMISSION
OF DELAWARE

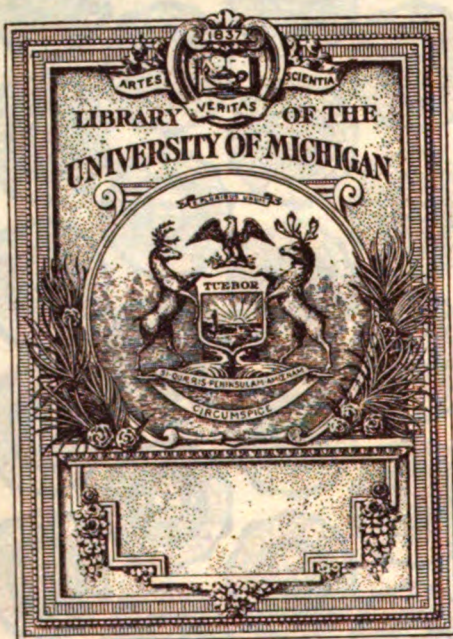
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1918

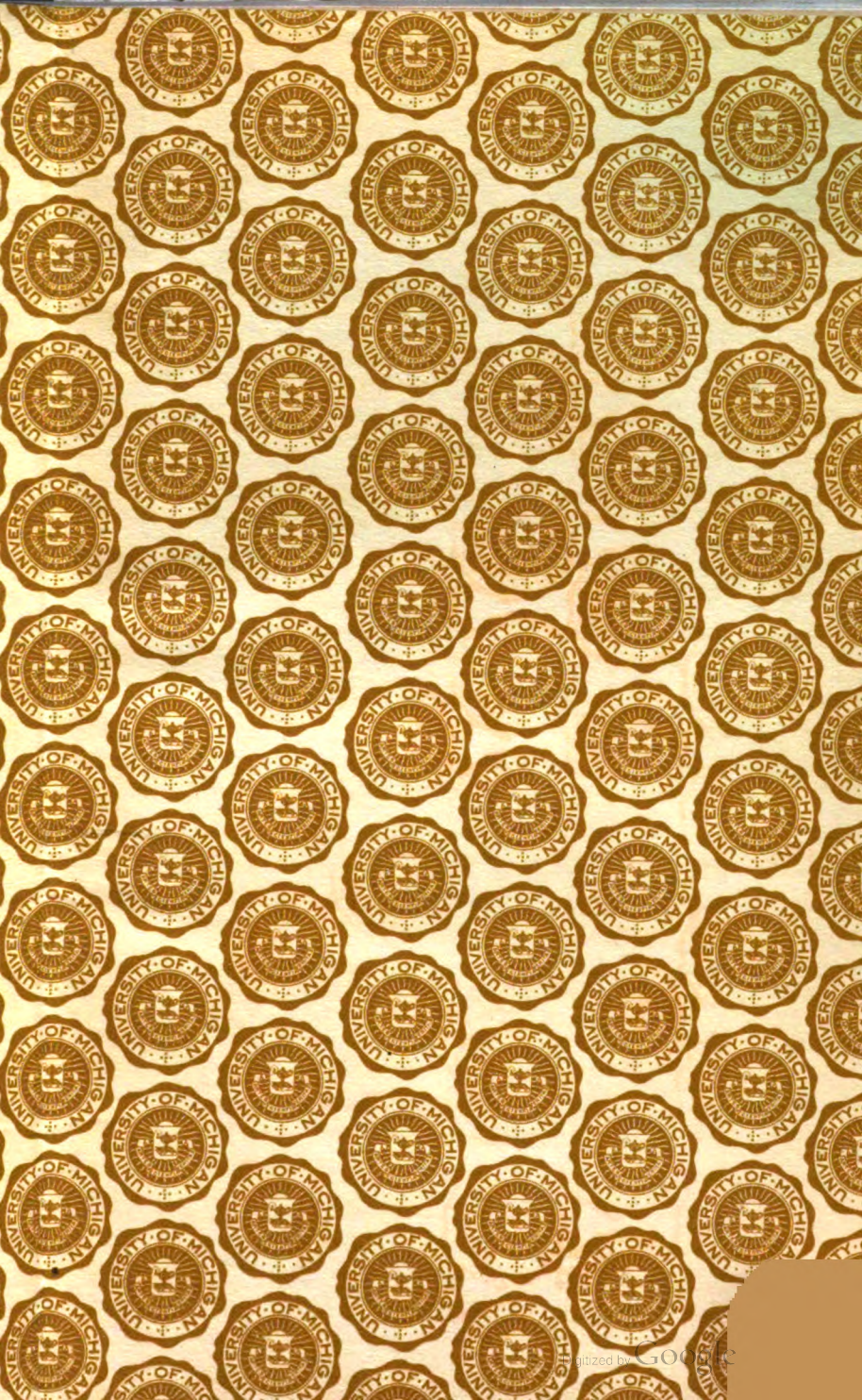
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PUBLIC EDUCATION IN DELAWARE

General education board

PUBLIC EDUCATION IN DELAWARE

**A Report to the
Public School Commission of Delaware**



GENERAL EDUCATION BOARD

61 BROADWAY

NEW YORK

1918

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One

LETTER OF TRANSMISSION

To his Excellency John G. Townsend, Jr., Governor of the State of Delaware:

The Legislature of the State of Delaware, at the session in 1917, passed an act for the purpose of creating a commission to study educational conditions in Delaware and make recommendations to the Legislature of 1919. The act of 1917, chapter 186, which created said commission, in part reads as follows:

That the Governor of the State of Delaware be and he is hereby authorized and empowered to appoint a Commission of five members, one from each County of the State and two at large, to make a survey of the public schools for both white and colored children in the State, to study the administration of the said schools, to consider the appropriations made therefor, to investigate the use of the funds so appropriated, to harmonize, unify and revise the school laws, to develop an educational system suited to the conditions existing in the State, providing for an improved and efficient administration of all free school matters and the training of a competent teaching force, and said Commission is hereby directed to report its findings and recommendations to the Governor, which report shall be transmitted by the Governor to the General Assembly at its session of 1919 * * *

That the said Commission shall have power to arrange the organization and equipment of the survey as it may deem best, to employ and fix the compensation of clerical, professional, expert and other help, to purchase such books and supplies as it may require, and in general to make any provisions for the work as may be deemed necessary and expedient.

The Commission was unanimously of the opinion that the work of making this survey and making recommendations for the betterment of our school conditions ought to be done by the best school experts to be found. Your Commission, therefore, made a very thorough inquiry in regard to school experts; and, as a result, prevailed upon the General Education Board of New York to undertake the survey. Your Commission feels that the State of Delaware was particularly fortunate in securing the services of this Board at this time.

It is also fitting that we should here state the fact that the General Education Board made no charge against the State of Delaware for the salaries of the trained and experienced school experts of the Board who were assigned to our work; and that the only charge made against us was the expense incurred in making the investigation. There is therefore a larger sum available for the publication of the report and we have arranged for the immediate distribution of 7,500 copies among the people of the state, in order that the widest publicity possible may be given of the facts therein contained. A copy can be obtained by any interested citizen.

The present report, by Dr. Abraham Flexner and Dr. Frank P. Bachman, has been carefully read by and discussed with your Commission, and it meets with the hearty approval of your Commission; and your Commission earnestly recommends the adoption of the suggestions made therein, and further recommends that the Legislature of the State of Delaware pass the laws

herewith submitted, for the purpose of carrying out these recommendations.

Dr. Flexner, now one of the secretaries of the General Education Board, was formerly connected with the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. He is the author of "The American College," "Medical Education in the United States and Canada," "Medical Education in Europe," and numerous papers dealing with educational subjects.

Dr. Bachman has served as Assistant Superintendent of the schools of Cleveland, and was a member of the staff of experts who, headed by Professor Hanus, conducted the survey of the schools of New York City. He has also taken an important part in similar investigations elsewhere. He has published books entitled, "Problems in Elementary School Administration," and "Principles of Elementary Education." His contributions to the New York school survey deal with the elementary schools and the school budget. Dr. Flexner and Dr. Bachman also gained valuable experience, which inured to our benefit, in the educational survey previously made by them of public education in the State of Maryland. It may not be amiss to state that they recommended a thorough reorganization of the school law of Maryland and that the measure embodying

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their recommendations was promptly adopted by the Legislature of Maryland.

It is with a deep sense of humiliation to our state pride that we learn that the State of Delaware, which was the first to sign the Constitution, which stood among the very first in every Liberty Loan, Red Cross or War drive during the recent war, and whose citizens have ever been most loyal to the best traditions of this country, stands so low in school efficiency. In view of the facts contained in this report, your Commission feels that it cannot urge too strongly the great necessity of taking effective steps at once to improve our school conditions. We now know that we are not doing for our children what we ought to do. We Delawareans cannot afford to have this said of us.

To possess poor schools is poor business policy, not only because they give us a poor grade of citizenship, but also from a purely financial standpoint. Money invested in good schools brings large returns. People seeking homes come to states and communities with good schools. This increases the value of property and farms in the good school states.

Education is fundamental to the development of a people. If the people of a state are properly educated they will always find a way to peaceably correct all evils which may arise in the community life. Proper education will make democracy safe for the world.

We consider the recommendations herewith submitted eminently practical. Dr. Wallace Buttrick, President of the General Education Board, when we requested that they make the investigation, stated that his organization was interested in getting practical results, and would not undertake to set up a Utopian scheme. Your Commission endorsed this policy. Accordingly, the changes recommended in this report are simple but fundamental. The school laws of the State of Delaware are weak in that they were enacted at various times and were not correlated, so that, while some of our boards possess sufficient powers, they lack means of enforcing the powers which the people had already given them, and these powers are, therefore, more or less nominal. The recommendations herein contained correct these mistakes.

The Commission respectfully submits herewith copies of the proposed bills drafted in line with its recommendations, to be submitted to the Legislature. We most earnestly urge the passage of these bills in the manner in which they have been submitted, without amendment, in order that the state may gain the full benefit of the recommendations of the experts who have rendered this service. We believe that if this is done a very great step in advance will be taken.

Your Commission as first appointed included the late L. Scott Townsend, one of the most beloved, energetic and public-spirited men of the State of Delaware. He gave to the work the very best that was in him; and we

wish the people of the State of Delaware to remember that the work here presented by us is also the work of L. Scott Townsend. He said in his lifetime, in speaking of this task, "I wish for no greater monument than some worth while work done for the school children of the State of Delaware." We feel that the adoption of the recommendations of the experts employed by your Commission will indeed be a fitting monument to one of the noblest citizens of our state, who passed away in the midst of this investigation.

We wish to make public acknowledgment of the valuable help rendered during this investigation by Dr. A. R. Spaid, Professors Wilbur Jump, Robert E. Shilling, Ernest J. Hardesty, and Miss Etta J. Wilson, and the large number of devoted school teachers whose services were ever at our command.

We cannot close this report without also expressing to you, Governor Townsend, our very deep appreciation of the unselfish aid which you personally rendered throughout the course of this investigation.

Respectfully submitted this twenty-second day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and nineteen.

CALEB E. BURCHENAL,
Chairman

JOHN S. MULLIN
FRANK L. GRIER
JOSEPH FRAZIER
HENRY P. SCOTT

INTRODUCTION

THE general assembly of Delaware at its 1917 session authorized the appointment of a commission to survey the public schools and revise the school laws of the state; this commission invited the General Education Board to make the survey; the present volume constitutes its report.

The facts here presented will, it is believed, convince the people of Delaware of the urgent importance of educational reorganization at this time. Delaware is a prosperous state fully able to provide an efficient and up to date school system for the children of the commonwealth. This the state is far, very far, from now possessing. The present school system is not indeed entirely without good features, for which full credit will be given in the course of this report. But, for reasons that will appear, what is good in the state school system is not effective; and over and above the few excellent features in question, the system is in many respects antiquated and undeveloped; its financial support is inadequate, general and local supervision are alike unsatisfactory, the teaching staff is largely untrained, and school buildings are with few exceptions seriously defective. In the following pages, these statements will be substantiated

and suggestions looking to improvement will be made. It should, however, be understood in advance that the suggestions made in this report are designed to bring about, not an ideal state of affairs, but such improvements as are at the moment desirable and practicable. It is our confident belief that if the recommendations here made are adopted the state will at once obtain an intelligently organized school system; and, what is even more important, conditions favorable to steady educational progress will have been established. From time to time in the future, further steps can readily be taken, as they are recommended by experience and supported by public interest.

PUBLIC EDUCATION IN DELAWARE

Public Education in Delaware¹

I. DELAWARE: ITS PEOPLE AND INDUSTRIES

A STATE school system ought to be planned with deliberate reference to the social and industrial conditions of the state which it is meant to serve. It is therefore important at the outset to learn the salient facts respecting the people of Delaware, their origin, their occupations, and their opportunities.

According to the United States Census of 1910, Delaware had at that date a population of 202,322. The number is now larger, owing especially to the recent rapid growth of Wilmington. The population in 1910 was distributed as follows: Kent County, 32,721; New Castle County (exclusive of Wilmington), 35,777; Wilmington, 87,411; Sussex County, 46,413. The growth between 1900 and 1910 had been small, being only 9.5 per cent., as compared with 21 per cent. in the country at large. This increase was confined principally to Wilmington, which gained 10,903, as compared with a gain of 6,684 in the rest of the state; in this decade New Castle County (exclusive of Wilmington) increased 2,588, Sussex County increased 4,137, while Kent County lost 41.

¹The schools of Wilmington are not included in this study.

4 PUBLIC EDUCATION IN DELAWARE

Delaware is largely a rural state. There were in 1910 in the entire commonwealth only four places having a population of 2,500 or more: Wilmington, with a population of 87,411; Dover, with 3,720; Milford, with 2,603; and New Castle, with 3,351. Forty-eight per cent. of the population of the state live in these four towns—43 per cent. in Wilmington, and 5 per cent. in Dover, Milford, and New Castle. The remaining 52 per cent. of the population are rural. There has been little change in the proportion of urban and rural dwellers since 1900. The generally rural character of the state becomes apparent, however, only when Wilmington is excluded: 92 per cent. of the population outside of Wilmington live in small villages or in the open country.

The population is composed almost entirely of two races—whites and negroes—171,102 or 85 per cent. white, 31,181 or 15 per cent. negro; there were, besides, only 39 Indians, Chinese, and Japanese.

Of the white population, 75 per cent. are native born of native parentage, 15 per cent. are native born with one or both parents foreign born, and 10 per cent are foreign born, the foreign born white population being confined almost entirely to Wilmington. Outside of Wilmington 96 per cent. of the white population are native born, and only 4.0 per cent. foreign born. It is also interesting to note that two thirds of the entire white population were born in Delaware. Thus, the schools of Delaware, particularly those outside of Wilmington, deal with an unusually homogeneous and stable white population.

The negro population (31,181) is increasing, though slowly, having gained less than 3,000 since 1890. Its distribution in 1910 was as follows: Kent County, 7,561, or 23 per cent. of the total population of the county; New Castle County (exclusive of Wilmington) 6,601, or 18 per cent.; and Sussex County, 7,938, or 17 per cent.

The people of Wilmington are engaged in pursuits and occupations incident to modern commerce and industry on a large scale; the rest of the state is engaged in general and diversified agriculture, particularly vegetable and fruit growing, and closely related industries, such as fruit canning. Trades and professions are represented in the smaller cities and villages to the extent that they are required by the needs of such communities.

The schools of Delaware thus serve two races—white and colored. Those outside of Wilmington—and this report deals with those only—serve a homogeneous, stable American population, distinctly rural, occupied particularly in the production of vegetables, in orcharding, and in related industries.

The educational needs of a people composed primarily of native stock and so engaged are well known and clearly defined. Are the schools of Delaware meeting these needs satisfactorily? What changes are called for, if any, in organization, supervision, teacher training, financial support, etc., that the schools may serve the state more effectively? To answer these and kindred questions is the object of this report.

II. PRESENT SCHOOL SYSTEM

THE administration of the schools of Delaware is centered in three boards: the state board of education, the county school commission, and the district school committee in rural districts corresponding to the board of education in incorporated districts.

Theoretically, the state board of education, consisting of seven members appointed by the governor, stands at the head of the system. It is, in the words of the law, the function of this board "to systematize and harmonize the work in the various free schools of the state, to render said schools more useful and efficient and to raise the standards of instruction and education therein." To these ends the state board of education has power to formulate courses of study, to select textbooks, and to prescribe rules and regulations controlling the certification of teachers, the sanitary equipment and inspection of school buildings, etc. It may require records and reports from school officials and teachers, investigate the condition of the schools, recommend school legislation to the governor and general assembly, and may employ such other officers, besides its secretary, as are needed. Indeed, as far as the letter of the statute goes the state board of education possesses blanket powers to

take such action "as it may deem necessary and expedient to promote the physical and moral welfare of the children of the free schools of this state." We shall shortly see, however, that these powers are in the main nominal, rather than real. The state commissioner of education, appointed by the governor with the consent of the senate, acts as the secretary of the state board of education and is in a sense its executive officer.

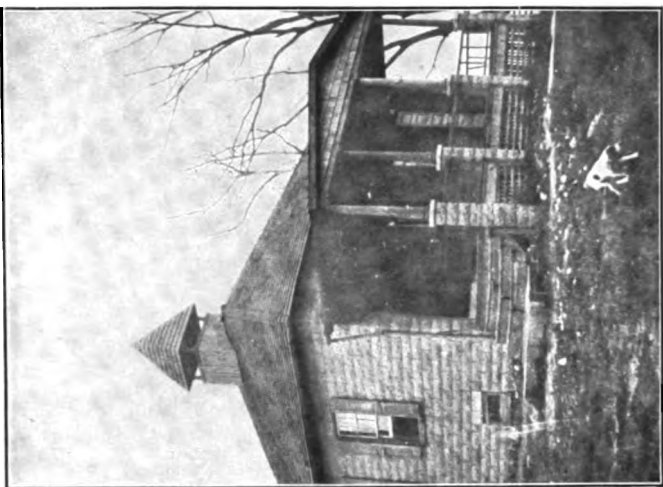
The county school commission, consisting of three members appointed by the governor, has, theoretically, jurisdiction over all schools of a county, both white and colored. To this end, the county school commission is authorized to visit all schools, to observe and question teachers concerning their methods of instruction and discipline, to act as a sanitary commission over school property, to lay out the boundaries between school districts, to hear complaints of patrons and teachers, and to confer with and aid the county superintendent. How far the commission is in position to make its action effective, and how it is related to the state board will appear in another chapter.

The county superintendent, also appointed by the governor, but with the consent of the senate, though not an officer of the county school commission, is its agent as far as it has an agent. He advises with the district committees about improvements in grounds and buildings and in reference to the appointment of teachers. He counsels with teachers as to the organization of their schools, their instruction, and discipline. Subject to

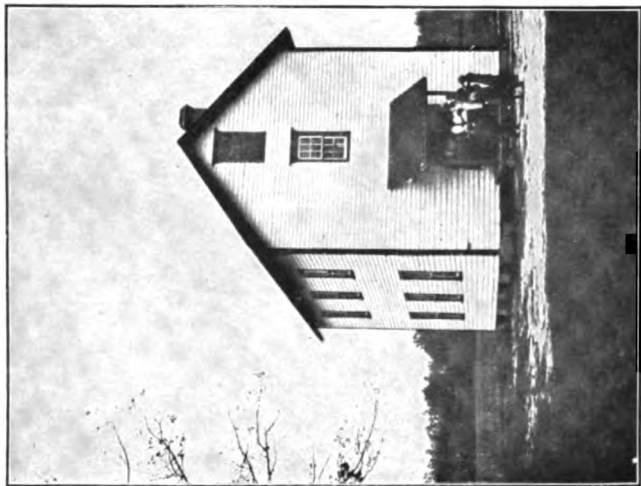
the authority of the state board of education, he also examines teachers and nonresident pupils, holds the county institute, directs the reading and study required for the renewal of certificates, and makes reports to the state board of education regarding his activities.

The title of the local administrative body varies. If the school is in the open country or village, its administrative body is the district school committee, and there is usually one such committee for each schoolhouse. Incorporated districts have boards of education. Strange to say, however, neither the district committee nor the board of education administers all the schools within its respective territory; for separate boards or committees are set up to have charge of schools for colored children. Indeed, if we may so far anticipate, white and colored schools are not only separately administered, they are, as far as local support goes, separately financed—the white schools enjoying all local revenues accruing from taxation upon the person and property of whites, the colored schools existing on the scanty proceeds from the taxation of the person and the property belonging to negroes. Thus, practically, there are two separate school systems, one for white, the other for colored children. No such anomalous and undemocratic arrangement can be found in any other state of the union.

The powers and duties of the local boards are much the same. The district school committee or board of education holds the annual school elections, calls special elections, levies and collects the local school taxes, borrows



Exceptionally Good Rural School



Typical Village School



money and issues bonds on the credit of the district, provides school grounds, equipment and buildings, employs teachers, fixes their salaries and dismisses them for cause, determines the length of the school year in excess of the required minimum, and prescribes rules and regulations for the conduct of the schools and for safeguarding the health of the pupils. In a word, subject to the approval of a majority of the patrons, and in a fashion to the authority of the state board of education, the local boards exercise complete control within their respective districts. However, this control, as we shall see, is not of a kind to be helpful in the solution of daily school problems, nor is it effective as a stimulus to improvement.

In the foregoing description three facts stand out prominently: First, the state board of education, the commissioner of education, the county school commission, and the county superintendent all represent the state. The governor appoints them all, and the state pays their salaries and contingent expenses. On the other hand, the district school committee or the local board of education is elected by the people and thus represents the people of the districts concerned. Second, while the state board of education, the county school commission, and the county superintendent have large powers, they have no way of making really effective use of them; they can issue regulations, but do not have the machinery needed to enforce them. The power of direct action belongs almost wholly to the district school committee

or local board of education, both of which thus possess preponderant influence over the schools. Third, the number of local boards and board members is very large. The white schools are governed by 292 district school committees, with a membership of 876, and by 44 boards of education, with a membership of 259; the colored schools are in the hands of 88 district school committees, with a membership of 264. Delaware, with three counties, thus has 424 local school committees or boards of education, and a total of 1,399 local administrative officials.

The schools over which these boards preside are of two grades—elementary schools, grades 1 to 8, inclusive, and high schools. Of the 44 incorporated districts 29 support high schools. Besides these 29 high schools, there were, in 1917-18, 336 elementary white schools and 90 elementary colored schools. The white schools altogether employed 620 teachers and enrolled 19,684 pupils, with an average daily attendance of 12,453. The colored schools employed 114 teachers and enrolled 4,479 pupils, with an average daily attendance of 2,093. Altogether there were, thus, outside of Wilmington, in 1917-18, 734 teachers and an enrollment of 24,163 pupils, with an average daily attendance of 14,546.

The total current expenditures on white schools during the school year 1917-18, exclusive of Wilmington, was \$400,126.37, which is equal to a current per pupil expenditure on total enrollment of \$20.33, and on average daily attendance of \$32.13. The total current expendi-

ture on colored schools was \$37,126.81, or a current per pupil expenditure on total enrollment of \$8.29, and on average daily attendance of \$17.75. The combined current expenditure was, therefore, \$437,253.18, which is a current per pupil expenditure on total enrollment of \$18.10, and on average daily attendance of \$30.06.¹

¹See Appendix, Table XIII, page 108a.

III. STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION AND COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION

IN PLACING at the head of its system of public education a state board of education and a commissioner of education, Delaware follows the most approved practice. Education has advanced most satisfactorily in those states in which a judicious combination of state and local authority has been effected. A proper degree of local responsibility insures the interest, effort, and pride of the community in which the school is located; the influence of the state makes for unity of design and for uniformity in standards and opportunity.

Delaware has had a state board of education since 1875. From 1875 to 1911 the board was ex-officio, composed usually of the governor, the president of Delaware College, the secretary of state, and the state auditor. It had up to 1898 little authority and performed only a few specified routine duties. In 1898 larger powers were conferred but without materially changing the situation. In fact, ex-officio boards of this character have perhaps nowhere functioned effectively. As now constituted the state board of education has existed only since 1911; it has had the assistance of a commissioner

of education only since 1913.¹ In its present form, therefore, the Delaware state board of education is of recent origin.

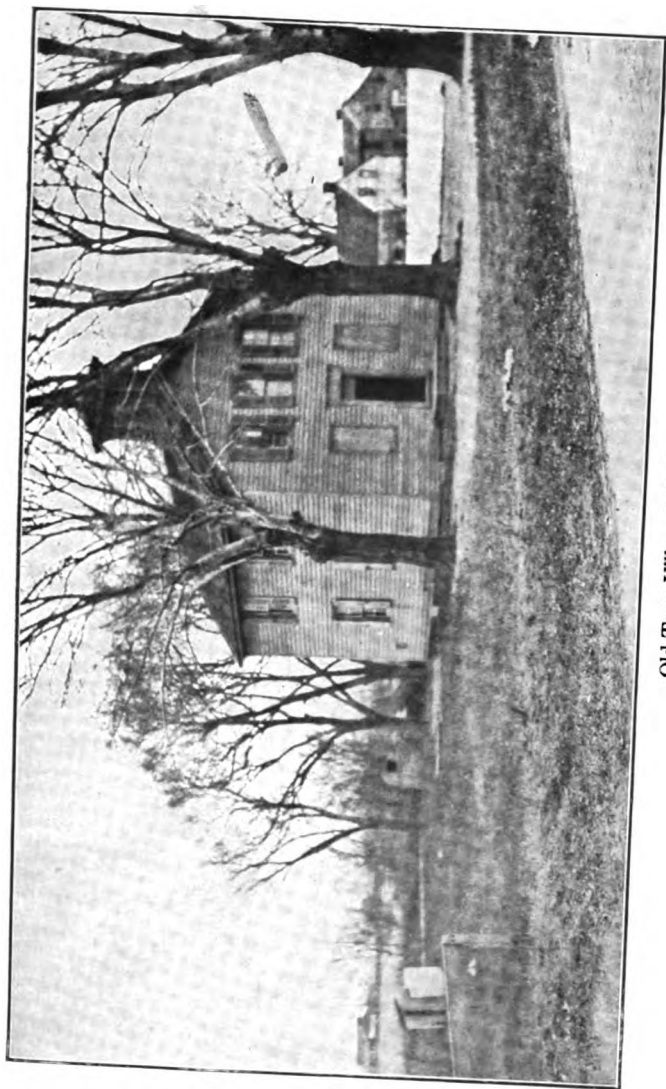
In these five years, the board has initiated a number of significant activities. A state course of study has been published; high schools have been classified; a new textbook list has been adopted; better training for teachers has been encouraged through opening a summer school for teachers at Delaware College and through securing state aid for teachers who attend summer schools; a statewide campaign for better school attendance has been carried on; a campaign has been conducted for the consolidation of schools and for state aid for consolidated schools; and a comprehensive program of school legislation was presented to the general assembly of 1917. The last year has been devoted particularly to the formulation of new rules for the certification of teachers, to putting into effect the law on the importation of dependent children, and to applying the Smith-Hughes law. Most of these measures are, however, so new that their beneficial effects are not yet evident. Thus, for example, the campaign for consolidation has so far resulted in a single instance of consolidation—the Cæsar Rodney School. Naturally enough, in the brief period under consideration, the board has not been able to make use of all its powers. It has not, for instance, prescribed rules and

¹The office of commissioner of education was created in 1875 under the title of state superintendent; it was, however, abolished in 1887 and not restored until 1913.

regulations for the sanitary equipment and inspection of school buildings.

Time alone will not, however, make the present board an effective body. It is not, as a matter of fact, constituted nor are its functions defined on sound educational or administrative principles. A board of education meeting three or four times a year for a few hours at a time cannot be charged with originating or itself executing policies, nor can it undertake to decide and supervise matters of detail. These are functions and duties which properly belong to a paid expert executive—a commissioner of education—who devotes all his energy and time to his work. There is, however, another type of public service, in a high degree valuable and important, which a state board can perform, viz., it can represent the people in large matters of educational policy, keeping the viewpoint of the layman and the needs of the people before the executive. The state board thus becomes a criticizing, suggesting, and reviewing body which its expert executive must consult and convince in all matters of moment. Such a board cannot take the place of or supersede its executive officer, but it can make sure that he does his duty and it can enormously assist him with suggestion and counsel.

A lay board, whose members have been selected by the governor with these ends in view, is likely to prove the most effective instrument for this purpose. We have already briefly touched on the objection to an ex-officio board—its members may or may not be really interested



Old Type Village School



in education; in any event, their main responsibility lies elsewhere, and they are brought together only, as it were, accidentally, for brief terms, to act on educational matters. The present board is an undoubted improvement on the ex-officio board; it is, however, open to criticism on the ground that, containing, as it does, professional members, it is liable to regard questions of policy from an academic rather than the popular point of view.

The present situation is also defective in consequence of a confusion between powers properly belonging to the state board and powers properly belonging to its executive officer, the state commissioner of education. This confusion is due to the fact that the state board of education obtained many of its present powers during the period when there was no state superintendent. When the office of superintendent was restored in 1913, the power of appointment was vested in the governor with the consent of the senate. The board retained the powers previously assigned to it; while the commissioner of education became its ex-officio secretary, he bears no other legal relation to it nor is he responsible to the state board, although that board prescribes his duties. We therefore have this incongruous situation: On the one hand, a state board with large powers and duties, but without a fully responsible executive; on the other hand, a commissioner of education, who is an executive without real responsibility or power. Fortunately, the state board and the commissioner have in most instances thus far worked in harmony. Nevertheless, the law obviously requires

revision. The state board of education should select a commissioner of education, who should be its responsible executive, with full powers of leadership, while the board itself should be vested with powers of suggestion, review, and final approval.

We have called attention to the fact that the state board lacks effective means of enforcing its authority. The state auditor, in settling the accounts of school officers, and the state treasurer, the trustee of the school fund, in making the apportionments of state moneys are indeed supposed to follow the rules and decisions of the state board of education, but the authority and influence of these officers can be and are at best only nominal. They can do little beyond inquiring (1) whether the schools have been in session the minimum of 140 days, and (2) whether the minimum tax of \$100 has been raised. The auditor's settlement, coming at the close of the school year, cannot affect the past; the state apportionment by the state treasurer and the trustee of the school fund is made at the beginning of the school year, and promises for the future are, almost without exception, accepted in good faith. In practice, therefore, the state board of education has no way of enforcing the school laws or its regulations; indeed, it has only nominal control over the county superintendents, and none at all over the county school commissions. Thus, in effect, the state board of education, with all its powers, becomes little more than an advisory body. A school officer, for example, may commit malfeasance—the state board is powerless to

act. Teachers may be employed without licenses—the state board can only protest. Plans for a new school building may run counter to the principles of good school architecture, or a schoolhouse and outbuildings may endanger the health of pupils—the state board can only counsel. Clearly, the state department of education should possess the power to enforce the school law and such regulations and decisions as the law empowers the department to make.

To this end the state department requires financial support on a proper basis. The sum of \$2,000 appropriated by the state annually would be insufficient even for the contingent expenses of the state board, but out of this sum the board pays part of the incidental expenses of the three county superintendents and also supplements the expense fund of the commissioner of education, itself only \$300 a year. In consequence, the state department of education has not now and never has had proper quarters or an adequate clerical force. Its office force is usually limited to a single stenographer. For years it has occupied two or three small office rooms, which have to be vacated each second winter for months at a time, when the general assembly meets. The equipment consists of two flat top tables, two office desks, and a few chairs; the board owns two typewriters, a motor-driven mimeograph, one large and one small filing cabinet, and a bookcase.

It is therefore not surprising that such records, documents, and summarized information as would throw light

on the growth and development of the system and on the present condition of the schools are almost entirely lacking. The state board has simply never been in position to collect and file such records and documents or to make the necessary tabulations. By dint of effort, the board succeeds at intervals of about ten years in preparing and publishing a more or less comprehensive report, but the data contained in these reports, given, as they are, in detail, without summaries, are of little use. Strange as it may seem, the board does not even possess a complete file of its own reports nor are these to be found in the archives of the state. The public school system of Delaware is consequently uninformed about itself and public school officials lack the data essential to wise planning and effective administration.

Elaborate quarters and a large budget are not called for, but the state board and the commissioner of education should be provided with permanent quarters and equipment adapted to their needs. The office force should include at least two stenographers for correspondence, one record and filing clerk, and a statistical assistant.

To conclude, changes are obviously required in the state department of education if it is to become efficient. Appointments to the state board should be limited to laymen. The state board, not the governor, should choose the commissioner of education. The commissioner of education should be the board's responsible executive. The board should be in position to enforce the

school laws of the state and its own rules and regulations. The commissioner of education, chosen by the board, should be vested with full power of leadership, and the board, as such, should exercise its power through suggestion, review, and final approval. Finally, the financial support of the department should be increased sufficiently to provide ample quarters, an adequate office force, the necessary contingent expenses, including the expense connected with the publication and distribution of an annual report and occasional special reports.

IV. COUNTY SCHOOL COMMISSIONS AND COUNTY SUPERINTENDENTS

EACH of the three Delaware counties has a county school commission created by statute in 1898. The commission has three members, appointed by the governor for terms of three years. Not more than two of the three may be of the same political party. As a rule, only laymen are appointed. The state pays a maximum of \$100 a year to each member for his services and traveling expenses. Four regular meetings are required annually and there are also occasional special meetings. One member acts as secretary, but the minutes are fragmentary and incomplete. Like the state board of education, as we shall see, the county school commission has, as far as the language of the law goes, large powers. But, as in the case of the state board, these powers are largely nominal.

To illustrate: Subject to the regulations and oversight of the state board of education, the county school commission is charged with the supervision of all the schools of the county—white and colored. To this end, the county school commission is authorized to visit the schools, observe their work, and question teachers concerning methods of instruction and discipline. It is

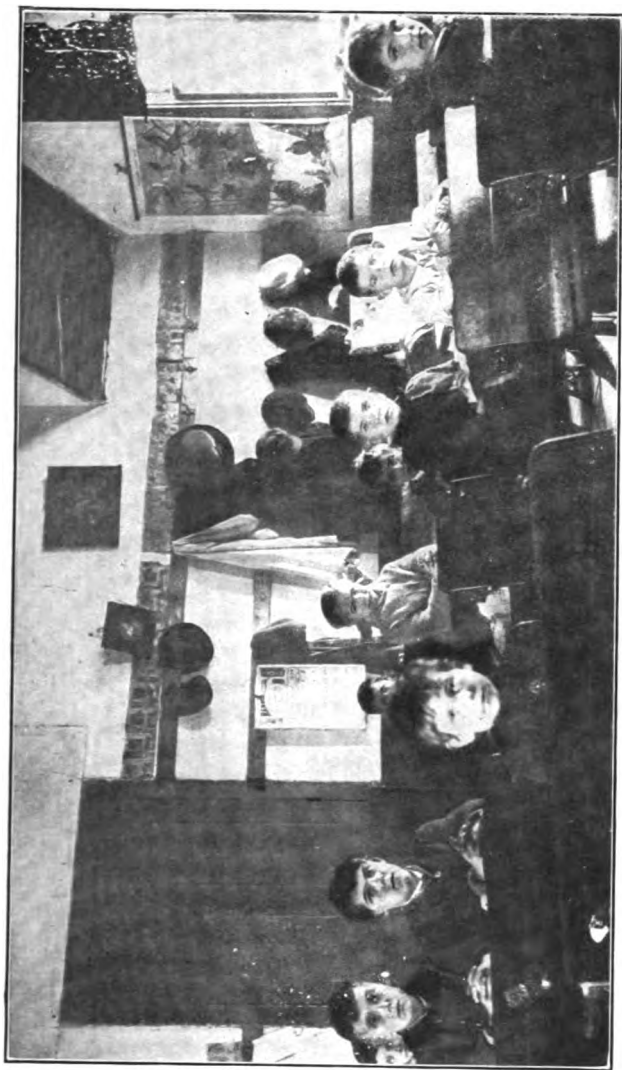
plainly impossible for busy laymen themselves to give much time to visiting schools, or to pass judgment on the technique of instruction. The commissioners are wise enough not to attempt it. The county commission could supervise only through paid supervisors, but they have neither money nor authority to employ them. Again, the state has quite properly authorized the county school commission to act as a sanitary board over school property. Although a lay commission may not be expected to know in detail the principles of good school architecture, its judgment on sanitary conditions and on needed repairs and improvements is generally sound. But in this field, where the county commission might give valuable service, it is rendered almost impotent, since it has no direct power to enforce its decisions.

Thus vested, on the one hand, with duties which, from their very character, lay commissions cannot perform, and, on the other hand, deprived of the power of direct action in the field where they might do a real service, the county school commissions settle into a perfunctory existence. At intervals, questions about the boundaries between school districts arise for settlement; now and then disputes between the officers of different districts, or between officials and teachers, come up for decision. Conferences are also occasionally held with the district committees of colored schools as to how best to apply the \$1,000 which the state occasionally appropriates to each county for the special improvement of school-houses for colored children. Once a year the commis-

sioners are expected to make a tour of a week or ten days, with the county superintendent, to inspect school grounds and buildings so as to make recommendations for improving them to the district boards. Some time is also given to conferences with the county superintendent. These activities are well enough in themselves, but after all they are not fundamental. It is therefore clear that the county school commissioners are not in position to assume leadership in county educational affairs, or to exert a positive, unifying, and progressive influence on the development of the schools.

The actual head of the county's educational organization is the county superintendent—an official who, curiously enough, is practically independent of the county board. He is, in fact, a state officer, for he is responsible to the governor, by whom, with the consent of the senate, he is appointed. The law, indeed, requires the county superintendent to attend the meetings of the county commission and to make such reports as it may request, just as it authorizes the county commission "to confer with him and aid him concerning the methods and systems which he has adopted or desires to introduce into the schools." On neither side is this relationship vital. The county superintendent is really closer to the state board of education, for he is required to attend its meetings, to make such reports as it may require, and to execute any reasonable request it may make.

The county superintendents hold office for two years; the salary paid by the state has recently been increased



Typical Village Schoolroom



from \$1,200 to \$1,600. The state contributes about \$500 annually toward traveling expenses, and from the state board of education they receive a small sum for contingencies—utilized mainly in enforcing the compulsory attendance law. These sums are altogether inadequate, particularly in view of the fact that superintendents are compelled to buy and maintain their own conveyances. Office accommodations are largely a matter of chance. The superintendent of New Castle County has an office, with the school commission, in the county building at Wilmington; the state provides the superintendent and commissioners of Kent County with an office in the capitol building at Dover; while the superintendent and commissioners of Sussex County have only an improvised office which the superintendent has fitted up in his home, mostly at his own expense. The superintendents have no regular assistance of any kind.

The county superintendent in Delaware is a supervisory and not an administrative officer. He has nothing to do with business and administrative school matters, except as the local school officials voluntarily appeal to him for help in finding a teacher or for advice regarding the erection of a new building, repairs or improvements. This sort of consultation is becoming more frequent.

The principal duties of the county superintendent as a supervising official are these: (1) the certification of teachers; (2) the supervision of instruction; (3) the improvement of teachers in service; (4) the enforcement of

the compulsory school attendance law; (5) the collection of school statistics; and (6) the development of public educational sentiment. Unfortunately for our purposes, two of the three county superintendents took office as late as July, 1918. Our description of the work of the superintendents applies therefore mainly to the superintendent who has been in the service almost a decade.

While the state board of education prescribes the conditions on which certificates are issued, the county superintendents conduct the examinations, and, until this year, read and graded all the papers of candidates in their respective counties. For example, the superintendent of Sussex County in 1917-18 examined and read, with very little outside assistance, the papers of 196 white and 10 colored teachers; 62 of the white teachers were examined twice in certain subjects. Similar data are not available from the other counties, but the numbers examined were probably not so large. The reading and grading of papers in such numbers is a grueling and time consuming task, of which the superintendents should be relieved—in the first place, because they can employ their time to better advantage, and, again, because they should neither be exposed to the pressure frequently exerted to secure certificates for local candidates, nor handicapped by the opposition often aroused when local candidates fail. But there is a fundamental objection to the present practice. The certification of teachers is a state function, and as long as there are four

different portals to teaching—the state board and the three county superintendents—uniformity in standards cannot be obtained.

Again, the law requires the county superintendent to spend with each teacher at least two hours annually, observing her work and assisting her, “to the end that improved methods of instruction and discipline are introduced in the schools.” It is, however, humanly impossible for a single superintendent to fulfill more than the letter of this law. New Castle County has, for example, a total of 197 teachers, 168 white and 29 colored, scattered over an area of 425 square miles.¹ Kent County has a total of 235 teachers, 191 white and 44 colored, scattered over 617 square miles; and Sussex County, a total of 302, 261 white and 41 colored, scattered over 913 square miles. In Sussex County the most the superintendent can do is to visit all the teachers, white and colored, once a year for an hour to an hour and a half, with an occasional short return visit when there is special need. To systematize observations and suggestions, the state board has prepared a blank covering a number of vital points in instruction—the use of school time, the care of children’s health and comfort, etc. Such a blank is valuable both in directing the superintendents and in making clear to the teachers what is expected of them. The reports which the superintendents have on file, and the consolidated monthly reports to the state board, show that the superintendents

¹This allows 10 square miles for Wilmington.

are earnest and conscientious in endeavoring to carry out the law. But it is evident that the amount of attention that the superintendent can give to any one teacher is too brief to be very helpful. At most, he can make a few pertinent suggestions, leaving the teacher to apply them as best she can.

Other common and well tried means of improving teachers in service are employed—teachers' institutes, group meetings at convenient centers during the school year; and, more recently, the six weeks summer school, at state expense. While these devices are all valuable they are far inferior to personal supervision, of which, as we have seen, there is in Delaware relatively little. Without proper supervision, the teacher is left unaided and alone to face the problems and difficulties of school management. In fact, good supervision is so important that, whatever else may be done—the school year lengthened, better school buildings and more generous equipment supplied, salaries raised, etc.—little improvement in instruction can be expected in the rural districts of Delaware, until intelligent supervision is provided. To this point we shall have occasion to return again and again in succeeding chapters.

Of the remaining duties of the county superintendent, the most important is the enforcement of the compulsory school attendance law—a responsibility which he divides with the district school committee and local boards of education. The law permits district committees and boards of education to appoint attendance officers,

but there is not a single attendance officer in all Delaware. In the absence of regular attendance officers, the law authorizes the clerk of the district committee or board of education to act in that capacity. Naturally, the school clerks, with rare exceptions, do nothing, for officials already otherwise occupied cannot be expected to perform such services. The entire responsibility thus ultimately falls on the superintendents. Yet, without the necessary information, without clerical assistance, without a developed public sentiment, it is impossible for them to accomplish much. Obviously, a complete and up to date school census, that is, a list of all the children of compulsory school age, is the primary requisite. But Delaware takes no such census. The school clerk is supposed to report to the superintendent at the beginning of the school year all children of compulsory school age in his district, for which service he receives a dollar for each 100 names or fraction thereof. But, even after they have been corrected and supplemented by the teachers, these lists are incomplete and unreliable. Nevertheless, they furnish all the information that superintendents possess. It is therefore not surprising to find that large numbers of children are irregular in attendance. The separate school districts are too small to employ attendance officers, school clerks cannot be expected to enforce the law, and the county superintendents have neither the necessary information nor the necessary time. It should, however, be added that under the leadership of the commissioner of educa-

tion the county superintendents have recently been exceedingly active in arousing the public to the importance of more regular school attendance.

Finally, schools cannot be properly managed except in the light of full knowledge of educational conditions and needs. The school law of Delaware, recognizing this fact, specifically charges the county superintendents with the collection of school statistics. In consequence, there are on file in the office of each superintendent the names of the clerks of the several school districts, a list of the teachers employed, of the children of compulsory school age, as far as known, and a record of the last visit to each school. These data, important as far as they go, are far from covering the ground. There are no reports on enrollment and attendance, on ages and the grades of children, promotion and non-promotion, no examination records, and no complete financial statement. In short, the county superintendents are without definite, organized information on most of the important aspects of school work. The public is of course uninformed, for the superintendent issues no annual report, although two superintendents have in recent years made special reports on school buildings in New Castle and Kent counties. The failure of the superintendents to collect and file the information that should be found in such offices is due partly to the fact that they are supervisory and not administrative officers, partly to the fact that they are without clerical assistance and without filing facilities. Meanwhile, the information in question

is essential to good supervision and effective administration.

To conclude: The county school commissions do not occupy a position of leadership in county educational affairs and cannot exert a decisive control over the schools. The county superintendents are practically the sole centers of county-wide influence. Yet even they are at present in no position to effect any marked improvement in public education. The relations between the county school commission and the county superintendent must be revised, the powers of both greatly increased, and means of enforcing a progressive school policy provided.

V. DISTRICT SCHOOL COMMITTEES AND BOARDS OF EDUCATION

THE district school committees and local boards of education are the bodies most closely in contact with the schools. The distinction between them is not fundamental. The former has jurisdiction over a rural district, which usually contains a single one room school; the latter, over an incorporated district, usually a town or city, although there are a few incorporated districts in the open country. The district school committees operate under the general school laws of the state, and are uniformly composed of a clerk and two members, elected by the people for terms of three years. Boards of education, on the other hand, while subject to certain sections of the general school law, usually operate under separate special acts. While these acts have some features in common, no two are exactly alike. Boards of education thus differ more or less as to membership, mode of election, terms of office, powers to acquire and hold property for educational purposes, to raise money, etc.

Local committees and local boards of education might, under a proper system, be important factors in developing good schools. But the power of the local school

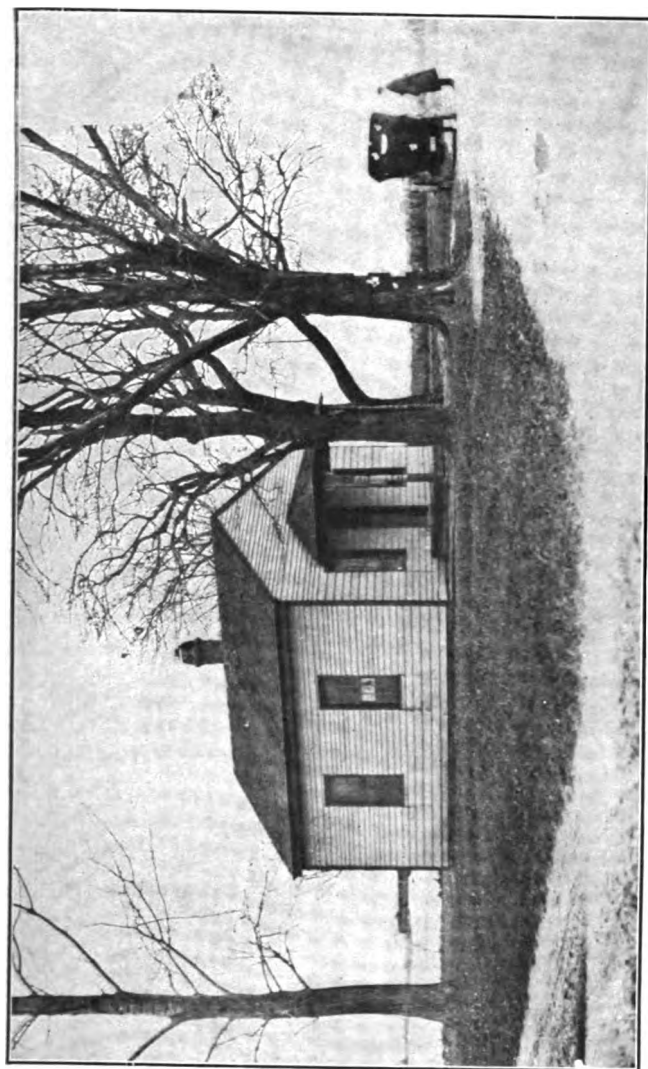
authorities is so limited that they can scarcely do more than keep the schools alive; to advance their efficiency is next to impossible. The reasons are plain. The law imposes on local committees and boards various duties in the way of general direction, inspection, and supervision. For example, they are expected to (a) prescribe rules and regulations for the conduct of the schools, (b) prescribe rules and regulations safeguarding and promoting the health of the children, (c) see that all children are instructed in physiology and hygiene, (d) see that the constitutions of the United States and Delaware are taught, (e) see that each school is provided with a flag and with maps of the United States and Delaware, (f) visit the schools at least four times a year, etc. Lay school officials, mostly without executive assistance, cannot themselves perform such duties. Meanwhile, the local units are, with rare exceptions, too small and therefore financially too weak to employ as their agents superintendents or supervisors who might administer and oversee.

Again, the powers of local school authorities over business matters—power to provide grounds, buildings, and equipment, employ teachers, fix their salaries, dismiss them, etc.—are apparent rather than real. Power really rests with the voters of the district. For example, the district school committees cannot actually engage a teacher, cannot provide school grounds and buildings, without a majority vote of the district. On their own initiative, they can levy and collect annually only \$100;

the voters of the district must sanction every additional cent. Thus a popular referendum must be taken as to whether a teacher's salary shall be increased from \$45 to \$50 a month, whether a heater shall be purchased, or the schoolhouse repainted. The necessity of submitting to popular vote almost every detail of school management involving expenditure results in educational paralysis. Here and there the members of a district committee carry on a continuous campaign among their neighbors for greater liberality in school expenditure. But most committees are content to follow the line of least resistance—that is, they conduct the schools at a minimum cost to the taxpayers. Active men, capable of bearing responsibility, are reluctant to accept a post to which so little genuine responsibility is attached.

Boards of education are in practically the same position. The amount of money they can raise is strictly limited. One board has power to employ only a single teacher. At every session of the legislature bills are introduced to increase the money raising power of the school boards, but even in such cases, the proposal usually falls short of the pressing needs of the schools at the time.

We have already called attention to the fact that a rural school district is usually limited to a single room school. As a result of this extreme subdivision, Delaware is divided into 292 white school districts, 88 colored districts, and 44 incorporated districts, a total of 424 small educational republics, managed by 1,399 school officials,



Typical Rural School



who, with the exception of the clerks, serve without pay. In creating these 424 independent educational units, one question has been asked: Are there enough children in the proposed district to warrant the building of a one room schoolhouse and the employment of one teacher? Now, a school in the full sense of the term is decidedly more than merely a rectangular room and a teacher. No district, large or small, should be a separate school unit unless it is large enough to perform the functions of a separate educational unit, that is, financially able, after contributing its due proportion to financing the educational program of the state and county, to provide schools of a standard elementary and high school grade, with adequate grounds, buildings, and equipment, well trained teachers, and the requisite administrative direction and control. On this basis, not to exceed two or three of the largest towns in any one of the three counties could qualify as a separate school district. Created without regard to educational requirements or financial ability, the 424 educational units of Delaware, having no responsibility for the status of education in the state, the county, or even in the adjoining district, go their own way, thinking narrowly of their own educational needs.

No wonder that popular interest in education is slight. The annual district school meeting is, with occasional exceptions, poorly attended, unless strong differences of opinion arise over the choice of a teacher or additional school expenditures. Otherwise, not more than one

in six voters is present. Indeed, the usual number in the rural districts is about ten,¹ including the three school officials. In one instance, when the annual district meeting was called to order, only two patrons were present—a father and his son-in-law, both members of the district school committee; they elected a son of the father to the committee as clerk and then proceeded to employ the daughter of the father—although she had no certificate—as teacher for the ensuing year.

Unsupported by anything approaching an active interest in education, the district school committees and local boards of education are similarly perfunctory in their attitude. Burdened with duties which they cannot discharge and without power in fields where they might act, what they can do is too petty to attract and hold the interest of strong men. The district school committees rarely hold more than one formal meeting a year. Such other business as they transact is transacted informally as they may happen to meet, now here, now there. Boards of education, with few exceptions, do little better. They as a rule have one or two formal meetings to fix the tax levy and to employ teachers, but subsequently it is impossible, for months at a time, to bring the members together, even when the matters at issue are pressing and important.

Under the district system the amount of effort necessary to carry a reform of even the simplest character is prohibitive. Recent attempts to improve the heating

¹See Appendix, Table I, page 99.

of one room schools furnishes an example in point. The old method of heating these buildings is by means of an open stove in the center of the room. While children sitting near the stoves are too hot, those at a distance complain that they are "freezing." A modern heater ensures a uniform temperature in all parts of a room and ventilates it as well. There is no question of the superiority of the heater to the open stove; yet, to introduce heaters into all the one room schools of Delaware it would be necessary not only to convince 325 different district school committees, but also to convince a majority of the voters of each district, for the question of purchasing a heater has to be submitted to the annual district meeting. Faced by this impossible task, it is not surprising that the county superintendents have labored for years to introduce heaters into the rural districts, with only partial success. Under centralized control, it would be necessary to convince only a single board; if the board's decision were favorable, heaters would be promptly introduced, as needed, everywhere.

Again, under the district system, difficult as it is to achieve a progressive end, it is still more difficult to maintain it. To illustrate: A certain district experienced some ten years ago an educational revival. The people constructed and equipped one of the best one room school buildings in the state and engaged a well trained and experienced teacher. For a time they had a good school. But, left to themselves, without effective general or local direction, interest cooled. The schoolhouse is now in

ill repair, and the school is very poor. At another point, there was constructed some ten years ago what is even now a fairly good school building; but the board of education is so hampered in the matter of providing funds that few well trained teachers are employed. The district in question has therefore a good school plant, but a poor school.

The district system has other equally serious defects. Inevitably it makes for excessively wide differences in educational opportunities and in school tax burdens. In one district the schools are open nine months, in another, eight months, and in still another, seven months.¹ Likewise, in one district the school poll tax is \$2.00, in another, \$6.00.² Again, the property school tax in one district is 7 cents on the hundred dollars, and in another district, 100 cents.³ Thus inequality reigns where sound policy requires something approaching uniformity. The truth is the district system represents pioneer conditions. It goes back to the time when an isolated group, desiring some sort of school for its children, pooled its meager resources in order to establish a neighborhood school. Increased wealth, larger numbers, improved communication, more complicated educational requirements render the district system obsolete.

A qualified county system should displace the present district system. At its head should be a county board

¹See Appendix, Table II, page 99.

²See Appendix, Table III, page 100.

³See Appendix, Table IV, page 101.

COMMITTEES AND BOARDS OF EDUCATION 37

of education, elected by the people, vested with large powers and directed to establish and to maintain efficient schools. The entire county, with exceptions to be noted, would thus become the unit, all the county schools forming a system, in the development of which intelligence and design may be employed. With the total county school tax, plus the state dividends, something like statesmanship may be exercised in locating, erecting, equipping, and consolidating schools. Educational opportunities can thus be more or less equalized throughout the county. The revenues of the board and the size of its field would warrant the employment of a competent staff, consisting of county superintendent, supervisors, attendance officer, and clerks. County education thus organized would attract to the county board the ablest and most public spirited citizens of the community.

A county system of this type would not, however, involve the abolition of district school committees and local boards of education; these local school officials could still be utilized, though with modified powers and duties. The more populous and wealthy centers should be erected into separate school districts, provided they fulfill certain specified requirements as to the grade of schools to be maintained, the grounds, buildings, and equipment to be provided, the preparation of the teachers to be employed, and the administrative direction and supervision to be supplied. Such a county system would thus permit the larger towns to enjoy local educational autonomy, and at the same time secure to the smaller towns, villages,

and the open country the benefits of a centralized organization.

In conclusion, it is only fair to remind ourselves that the district school committees and local boards of education should not be held to too strict an account if they have not performed effectively the duties imposed upon them, and have permitted the schools, as a rule, to eke out a miserable existence. The fault rests with the system under which they work—that is, with the state. Delaware does not conceive of education as a general function to be exercised and directed by the state. It is viewed, rather, as a local concern. Indeed, the term “free public schools” has never meant in Delaware and does not now mean much more than that separate communities are permitted to provide schools at limited public expense. The state has enacted certain general laws; it has created the above mentioned executive and supervisory boards; it pays the tuition of certain pupils in graded schools, and apportions a small sum to each committee or local board for each teacher employed. But its general laws are narrow in scope and ineffectively applied; its executive and supervisory boards have no way of enforcing large and expanding school policies; its financial requirement of the separate districts does not ensure decent schools. Too much is left to the unconstrained initiative of small local units. The state has not frankly recognized its responsibility for framing an adequate policy and creating the organs, state and local, through which a sound policy may be progressively realized.

VI. THE TEACHERS

THE schools of Delaware, like those of other states, require teachers of different types: one type for the graded city school, a somewhat different type for the ungraded rural school, still other types for special subjects in elementary and high schools—such subjects, for example, as physical training, science, Latin, manual training, etc. Differentiation of function should imply specialization in training. That is, those who are to teach different subjects should be differently trained. The length and character of the training required by each of the several necessary types are not easy to fix. Yet it is commonly understood as the goal to be aimed at that teachers in the elementary schools, city or country, ought to possess high school education, followed by two years of normal school training; and that high school teachers should have passed through college with a certain amount of special training in the particular branches they are engaged in teaching.

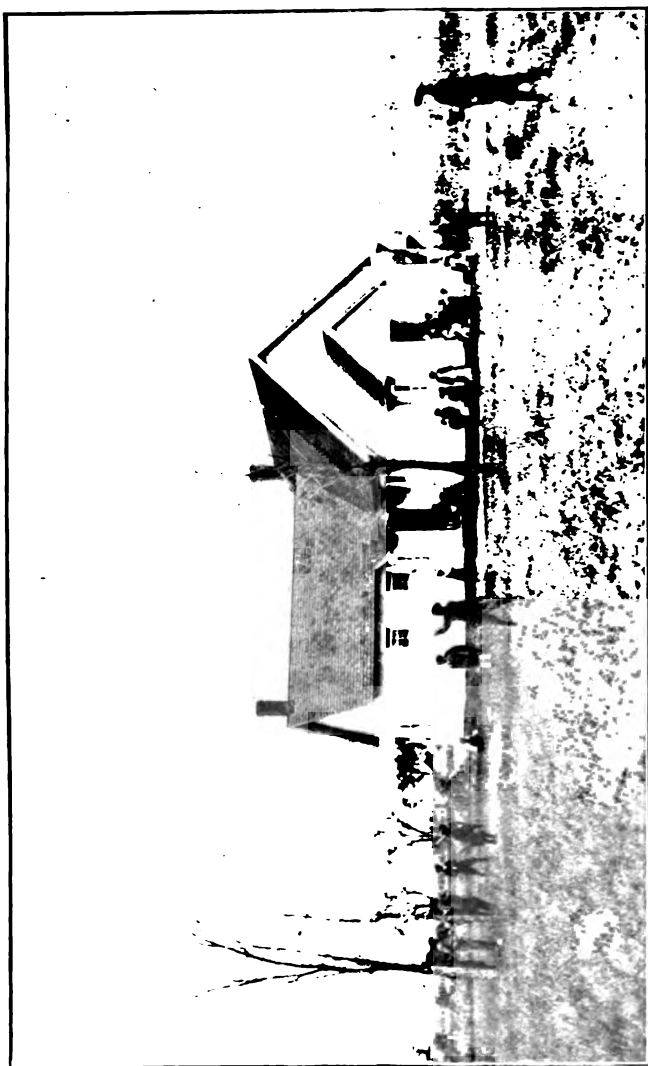
Delaware issues four kinds of teacher certificates: (1) primary and kindergarten certificates, valid in the kindergarten and the first three grades of the elementary school; (2) elementary certificates, limited and permanent, valid in the elementary schools; (3) high school certificates,

limited and permanent, valid in the high schools; and (4) normal and college graduate certificates, limited and permanent, valid in all schools of the state. Besides these regular certificates, permits or provisional certificates are used in emergencies. The various certificates require different degrees of academic and professional preparation.

As nearly as can be ascertained, there are now in Delaware 734 teachers. Cards asking for information about the certificates held, training or preparation, etc., were addressed to all teachers, but returns have been received from only 651, or approximately 90 per cent. of the number. Nevertheless, on the basis of data thus obtained it appears that of the 651 teachers reporting, only 127 or 20 per cent. hold normal or college graduate certificates, 80 hold provisional certificates, and 358 limited elementary certificates; that is, 67 per cent. hold the very lowest grade of certificate issued.¹

This is not surprising in view of the preparation or training disclosed. Of the teachers reporting, 81 are classified as high school teachers. The preparation of these high school teachers ranges from two years spent as student in a high school to a full college course; only 43 per cent. of them can be regarded as qualified to undertake high school instruction. The elementary teachers in incorporated districts are even less well equipped. Only 43 out of the 190 reporting, or 23 per cent., reach an acceptable standard of training, while 84, or 44 per cent.,

¹See Appendix, Table V, page 102.



Typical Two Room Rural School



have not completed a high school course. Teachers in the rural elementary schools make a still more unfavorable showing. In general, they are products of rural schools, and of high schools which give one, two, or three year courses. Of the 291 reporting, only 18, or 6 per cent., have had full normal training or its equivalent, 42, or 14 per cent., have never advanced beyond the grades, and 139 others, or 48 per cent., have had only part of a high school course. Of the elementary teachers, the colored teachers appear to be relatively the best prepared; 40 out of 89 reporting, or 45 per cent., are normal school graduates or have had part or all of a college course.¹ Figure 1 shows the proportion of teachers well prepared, and the proportion ill prepared.

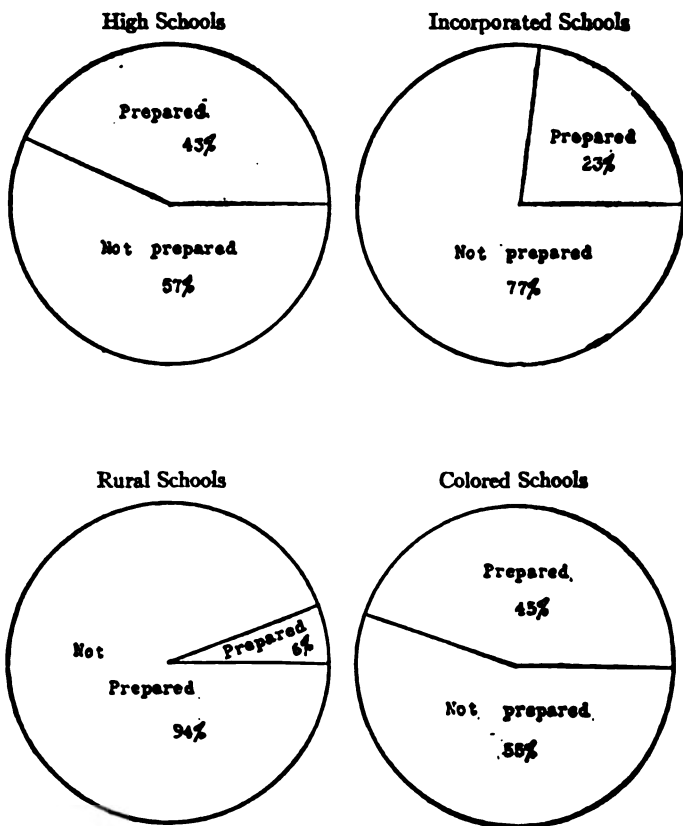
The teachers of Delaware are not only deficient in respect to training, they are in the main immature. Of the 651 reporting, 152, or 23 per cent., are under twenty-one years of age.² Nor is the number of older teachers large; only 27 are fifty years of age and older.

As is generally true throughout the country, the teachers are mostly new to the system. Good school work involves a knowledge of community needs. Newcomers are at a disadvantage in this respect. Of the 651 teachers under consideration, 160, or 25 per cent., entered the system this year. Only 38 per cent. of the entire number of those regarding whom we obtained in-

¹See Appendix, Table VI, page 103.

²See Appendix, Table VII, page 104.

FIGURE I
PREPARATION OF TEACHERS, 1918-19



formation have been in the system five years or more.¹ Conditions may be somewhat unusual at this time, but in any case the annual loss is large. The number of new white teachers (including Wilmington) in 1916-17 is stated to have been 158, 35 in the incorporated and 123 in the rural districts. Again, the tenure of teachers already in the system is short and shifting of position is common. While 160 of the present teaching force are new, 245 hold new positions, 109 are in their second year in the same position, and 68 in their third.² Thus, within the system there is constant flux, unfavorable to continuity of instruction.

That Delaware has a body of teachers so poorly trained and so unstable is due in part at least to two factors: low annual salaries and inadequate provisions for teacher training, particularly for the training of elementary teachers. The present monthly salaries of teachers in Delaware are not bad, there having been a notable increase even over 1917-1918. Thus the median monthly wage of high school teachers—all principals except 8 being included—is \$90, approximately half receiving more and half receiving less; of elementary teachers in incorporated districts, \$65; of rural teachers, \$60; and of colored teachers, \$45. But the school term is so brief that annual salaries are low even though monthly salaries are fair. As few schools in incorporated districts run more than nine months, high school teachers receive a

¹See Appendix, Table VIII, page 105.

²See Appendix, Table IX, page 106.

median annual salary of approximately \$810, elementary teachers a median annual salary of about \$585. Rural teachers receive a median annual salary of approximately \$420. The median annual salary of colored teachers is approximately \$315.¹ These salaries will not attract well trained and experienced teachers.

Equally fundamental is the problem of training teachers. From the establishment of public schools in 1829 until 1903 prospective teachers were left to their own resources to get such training as they could. After 1903 and until 1915, an annual appropriation ranging from \$1,000 to \$1,500 was made to each of the counties to pay the tuition of prospective teachers in the normal schools of other states. A small number of normal school graduates has been thus obtained. With the opening of the Women's College of Delaware, this appropriation lapsed, on the assumption that this institution would undertake teacher training.

The Women's College now offers two courses in education: one, a four year course for high school teachers, the other, a two year course for elementary teachers. The enrollment in these courses is now as follows:

Four year course—		Two year course—	
Seniors	3		
Juniors	5		
Sophomores	4	First Year	0
Freshmen	6	Second Year	2
	<hr/>		<hr/>
Total	18	Total	2

¹See Appendix, Table X, page 106a.

The graduates of these courses to date number 14 (2 in 1916, 1 in 1917, and 11 in 1918). Of these 2 are now teaching, but as this number will undoubtedly increase, it seems reasonable to believe that the Women's College of Delaware will furnish high school teachers and teachers of domestic arts to meet the demand.

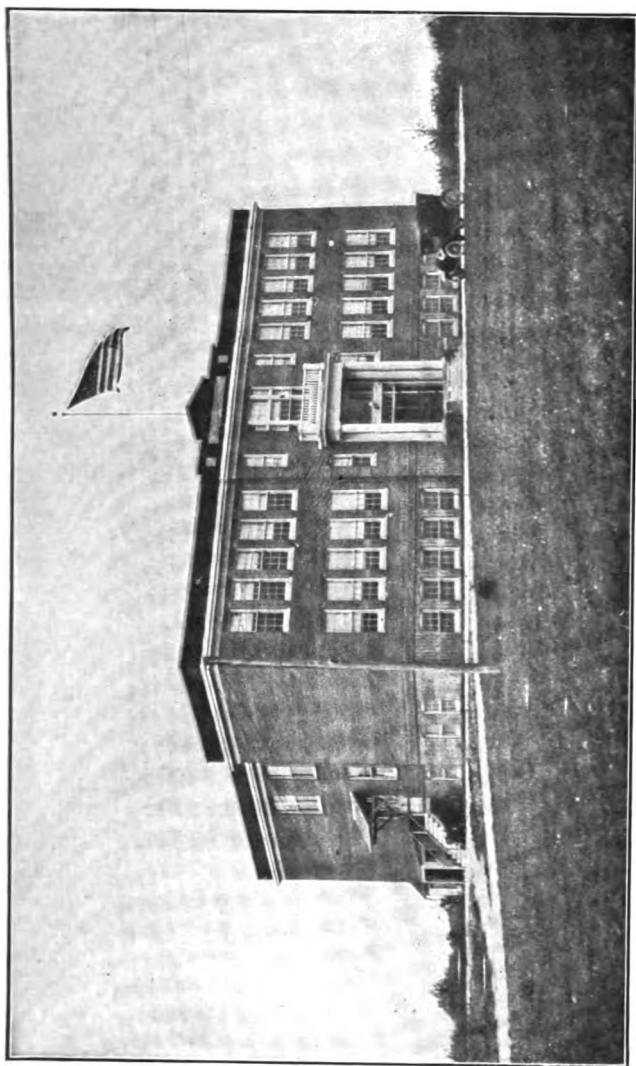
A similar function in respect to the training of men for high school posts falls naturally to Delaware College. We have stated that high school teachers should be college graduates, who have devoted part of their time to professional studies. This is as true of the old-line studies, such as mathematics, Latin, literature, history, science, as of the newer activities, such as agriculture and the industrial and household arts. To add educational courses where college courses in different subjects are already available requires additional provision only on the professional side. Hence, the state may confidently look to the Women's College and to Delaware College to train its high school teachers.

Adequate provision for the training of elementary teachers, particularly in the rural schools, has yet to be made. Such provision should at this time include intensive instruction in the subject matter which elementary school teachers must present, viz., arithmetic, penmanship, geography, United States history, drawing, handwork, etc., for the present graduates of the elementary and high schools are not proficient enough in these fundamental subjects to begin teaching them without further drill and instruction. In addition, the pros-

pective teachers should receive a certain amount of simple, practical training in the methods of teaching the common school subjects and in school management. The work should be organized and conducted in sympathy with village and rural life; and for obvious reasons the cost to the student should be low. Between 75 and 100 teachers trained in this way should be available annually, for a majority of the elementary teachers now in service must be gradually displaced by trained teachers, and a supply of trained teachers must also be at hand to take the place of teachers dropping from the system.

Improved facilities should also be provided for the training of colored teachers. This, however, can be readily done. The State College for Colored Students has for some years offered a training course for colored teachers. Although this school emphasizes the mechanical and industrial arts, 55 per cent. of its graduates, from 1898 to 1916, have become teachers; 40 of these are now teaching in the colored schools of the state.¹ The present training course is, however, far from satisfactory; its standards are too low, its facilities inadequate. Improvement in both these respects can be readily effected. The immediate need reduces itself to an additional teacher and a small practice school. To what extent additional appropriations would at once be necessary, we are unable to state. The school has a fair income—\$18,000. Of this sum less than 43 per

¹See Catalogue of the State College for Colored Students for 1917.



Caesar Rodney Consolidated School



cent. goes to salaries; the accounts are not so kept as to make clear in detail how the remainder is expended. It seems, however, not improbable that a financial reorganization might result in such economies that the additional teacher now required might be carried without additional state appropriation.

The upshot of the present chapter may be briefly summarized. Delaware is without the means of training teachers for its elementary schools. Its teaching corps is therefore largely ill trained and distinctly underpaid. The state cannot hope to have an adequate staff of good teachers in the elementary schools unless it provides proper facilities for their training and pays such salaries as competent teachers require for their support.

VII. THE SCHOOLS AND THEIR WORK

WE HAVE now discussed the main factors that determine the kind and the grade of the schools provided and the quality of the classroom instruction—organization, supervision, and teaching staff. We have learned that the organization does not provide the necessary central direction and control; that school authorities are powerless to finance good schools; that supervision is negligible; and that the teachers as a class are ill prepared, few having sufficient training to enable them to do satisfactory school work. Under these conditions, a liberal program of studies, up to date plants, and good teaching cannot be expected.

As stated before, the public schools of Delaware are of two grades—elementary schools (grades 1 to 8, inclusive) and high schools (grades 9 to 12, inclusive). While the programs of elementary and high schools are separate, they nevertheless form a single whole. The present course of study for elementary schools, prescribed in 1913 by the state board of education, represents a decided advance over previous courses of study. The earlier courses assigned the work for the several grades on the basis of certain pages to be covered in the adopted textbooks. The 1913 course of study confined

itself to defining aims and suggesting the larger topics of instruction and methods of treatment. Carefully studied and conscientiously followed, this course of study would undoubtedly exert a beneficial effect on classroom work. Unfortunately, few teachers outside of the larger centers are able, left to themselves as they are, to interpret and apply these directions. They need guidance and supervision and this the present system does not supply. The result is that prescribed textbooks, literally followed, constitute the course of study in the elementary schools of Delaware.

The list of prescribed texts is unusually broad and includes both old and recent texts. In the rural schools the teachers, to whom the choice is left, occasionally select the more modern texts; in the main, however, the older books are retained.

The studies prescribed for the several grades are as follows:

- Grade 1: Reading, writing, spelling, language, number, elementary science (including physiology and hygiene, and kindness to animals).
- Grade 2: Reading, writing, spelling, language, number, elementary science (as in grade 1).
- Grade 3: Reading, writing, spelling, language, arithmetic, elementary science (now also including oral geography).
- Grade 4: Reading, writing, spelling, language, arithmetic, geography, physiology and hygiene, and kindness to animals.
- Grade 5: Reading, writing, spelling, language, arithmetic, geography, history, physiology and hygiene, and kindness to animals.
- Grade 6: Reading, writing, spelling, language, arithmetic, geography, history, physiology and hygiene, and kindness to animals.
- Grade 7: Reading (may now be literature), writing, spelling, grammar,

50 PUBLIC EDUCATION IN DELAWARE

arithmetic, geography, history, physiology and hygiene, elementary agriculture.

Grade 8: Reading or literature, writing, spelling, language, arithmetic, geography, history, civil government, elementary agriculture.

This program covers the general range of subjects usually taught in elementary schools. The place of prominence is given to the three R's, to geography and history, and to physiology and hygiene. The only modern subjects are elementary science in the primary grades and elementary agriculture in the two highest grades. In point of fact, however, elementary science is scarcely taught at all, while agriculture receives but scant attention. In consequence, the present elementary course is in effect an antiquated type of school program. It makes no provision for activities now regarded as essential to a well rounded elementary education—for example, handwork, physical training, music and drawing, cooking and sewing for girls, and manual work for boys. Of course, rural schools could not be expected to do justice to all these activities, but in Delaware they are neglected not only in rural, but almost equally in village and city schools.

The present high school program was prescribed by the state board of education in 1915, and is as follows:

SUBJECT	NUMBER OF UNIT CREDITS
ENGLISH	4
(Composition, rhetoric, literature, reading of classics. Spelling and reading should receive one-fifth of the time)	

SUBJECT	NUMBER OF UNIT CREDITS
MATHEMATICS	
Algebra	1
Plane geometry	1
Solid geometry	$\frac{1}{2}$
Arithmetic	$\frac{1}{2}$
HISTORY AND CIVICS	
United States history	$\frac{1}{2}$
United States civics and Delaware civics	$\frac{1}{2}$
Ancient history	$\frac{1}{2}$
Medieval history	$\frac{1}{2}$
Modern history	$\frac{1}{2}$
English history.	1
LANGUAGES	
Latin	4
German ¹	2
French	2
NATURAL SCIENCES	
Physics	1
Chemistry	1
General science.	1
Physical geography	$\frac{1}{2}$
Physiology and hygiene	$\frac{1}{2}$
Botany	$\frac{1}{2}$
Zoology	$\frac{1}{2}$
Biology	1
Geology.	$\frac{1}{2}$
Astronomy	$\frac{1}{2}$
VOCATIONAL BRANCHES	
Domestic branches	1
Agriculture	1 or $\frac{1}{2}$
Manual training	1
Commercial law	$\frac{1}{2}$
Commercial geography	$\frac{1}{2}$
Shorthand	2
Bookkeeping	$\frac{1}{2}$ or 1
Typewriting	2
Penmanship	$\frac{1}{2}$

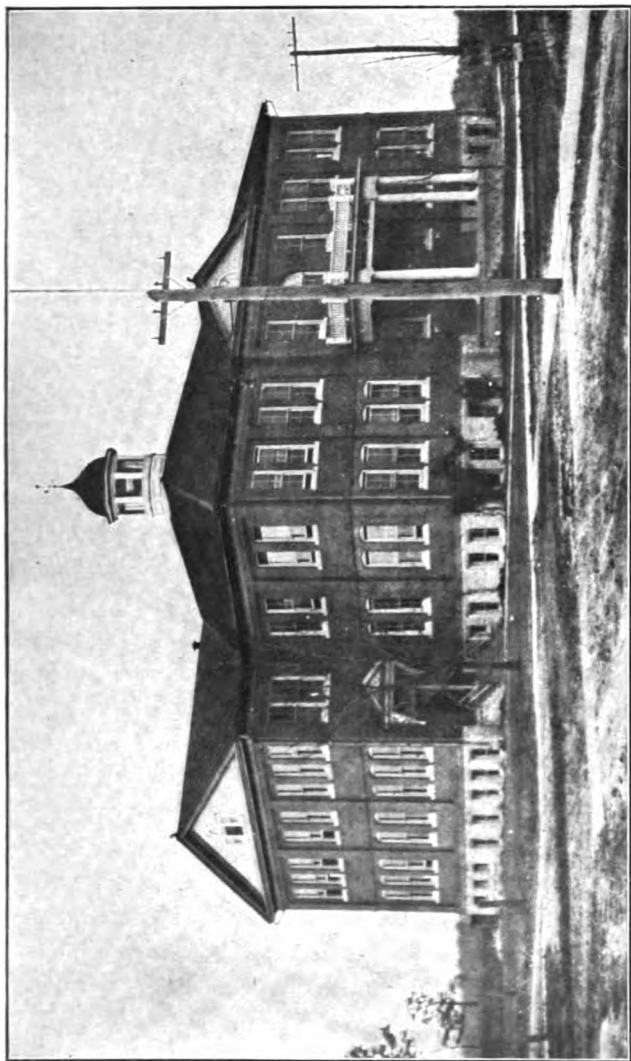
¹By action of the state board of education, German has been dropped.

To adapt this program to high schools of different sizes, three courses are outlined—one for a “ten unit” high school offering two years of work, one for a “fifteen unit” high school offering three years of work, and one for a “twenty unit” high school offering four years of work. Only four year high schools are expected to carry something like the full program given above.

These different courses are noteworthy in several respects. In the first place, none of them requires Latin. Latin is an elective or an alternative. Nevertheless, the great majority of Delaware high schools, whether they offer two, three, or four year courses, require all first year students to take Latin. However, the numbers dwindle rapidly from year to year.

Secondly, as is proper in view of their significance in modern life, large place is given to the natural sciences, ten different courses being prescribed. Despite these liberal prescriptions, the high schools teach little science. Not more than three high schools in the state have anything approaching satisfactory laboratory equipment, with the result that the science is mostly textbook science.

Thirdly, little prominence is given to the practical branches, such as domestic science and art for girls and manual training and agriculture for boys. Until last year there were not more than two high schools in the state that provided any work at all for girls in the household arts, and only one or two attempted manual training and agriculture for boys. However, the acceptance



Conventional Town School of Better Type



by the state of the provisions of the Smith-Hughes law will doubtless emphasize in the future the vocational branches. It is also to be noted that physical education is entirely ignored.

Finally, the state course of study prescribes the minimum number of teachers that may be employed—in a “ten unit” high school, at least one full time teacher, in a “fifteen unit” high school, at least one and a half full time teachers, and in a “twenty unit” high school, at least two full time teachers. When making these requirements, the state board of education was aware of the fact that satisfactory high school work cannot possibly be done with the minimum staff required, but even these inadequate requirements marked a decided advance.

The high school course of study, with the exceptions noted, thus corresponds closely to the conventional scheme. Even so, it is doubtful whether there are even two standard four year high schools in the entire state. Deplorable as this situation is, it must be remembered that the state has never directly offered financial inducements to the development of high schools. Without such inducements, high schools will grow as slowly in the future as in the past.

With the rural schools attempting nothing beyond the conventional studies, with no provisions for child welfare—such as warm luncheons, directed play, etc.—or, except recently, for community activities, it is not surprising that the rural schoolhouses of Delaware are

of a very old and conventional type. The nearest approach in all the state to a modern one room rural school building is the school in District No. 34, New Castle County.¹ This building is of cement block, with a basement, an attractive front porch, cloakrooms for both boys and girls, and a classroom of standard size. The walls of the classroom are tastefully decorated with good pictures; there are new single desks, window shades, slate blackboards, teacher's desk, oak glass-faced bookcase, an organ, and a basement furnace. Yet, even here, there are evidences of lack of thought and knowledge. The classroom is lighted in the old-fashioned way, from three sides, instead of from one; there is no artificial lighting, so that it cannot be used in the evenings for community gatherings; there are no provisions for industrial work for boys and cooking for girls, for serving hot luncheons to the children, and no inside play space for use in inclement weather. The grounds are small and uneven, providing neither space for demonstration beds in the teaching of elementary science and agriculture, nor playgrounds equipped with appropriate play apparatus.

There are practically no recent buildings in either Kent or New Castle County. In Sussex County, where a number of rural schoolhouses have been built lately, attempts made by the county superintendent to introduce modern features have mostly failed. District school committees have not yet learned that a rural

¹See illustration opposite page 8.

school should be more than a single rectangular room. Even when the county superintendent has enlightened the board, it is next to impossible to get things done. For example, unilateral lighting—lighting from one side—was attempted in two or three of the new buildings, but the actual lighting is a queer mixture; not one of these new buildings is properly constructed.¹ The failure in Sussex County to secure proper lighting proves the necessity of placing in the hands of the state board of education final control over building plans and specifications.

The one room rural school plants in Delaware, of which there are 327, are, therefore, with rare exceptions, of the conventional type. Some of them have a small entrance porch and small cloakrooms for boys and girls,² but they usually consist of a single rectangular room, which serves alike for school work, cloakroom, luncheon room, and play. The buildings are painted all colors; many of them are in bad repair; the lighting is almost always poor; about half are still heated by an ordinary stove; few of them have the arrangements needed for washing hands and faces. The seats are usually old-fashioned double desks; equipment is limited to a blackboard—generally slate—an inexpensive map of Delaware, a map of the United States, and a bird chart.

The building situation in the villages having two and even three room schools is equally unsatisfactory.

¹See illustration opposite page 66.

²See illustration opposite page 32.

The prevailing type of schoolhouse is the old two story rectangular building.¹ Nor is the situation much better in the larger towns, conditions being rather worse in New Castle and Sussex counties than in Kent County. With the exception of the DuPont school—which belongs in a class by itself—there is only one town building in the state that may be called modern, viz., the new consolidated Cæsar Rodney school.² This building embodies an unusual number of modern ideas in school architecture. The classrooms are lighted from one side; there is a rest room for teachers, another for children, and an office for the principal. Two classrooms, lighted from one side, end on end, divided by a sliding door, serve for the high school study hall, the school auditorium, and for community gatherings. The basement contains an attractive laboratory for the teaching of the household arts, with similar provisions for the teaching of natural science and agriculture. The school also has a good sized gymnasium, with shower baths and locker rooms for boys and girls. The grounds comprise about seven acres, ample for frontal park purposes, playgrounds and athletic field, and for garden work.

The buildings at Bridgeville, Greenwood, and Harrington³ are good structures, mainly on old lines; those at Smyrna,⁴ Dover, and Milford are fair, although the light-

¹See illustration opposite page 8.

²See illustration opposite page 46.

³See illustration opposite page 52.

⁴See illustration opposite page 60.

ing, particularly in the older parts at Milford, is bad, and the fire hazard considerable. Otherwise, the building situation in the larger towns of both New Castle County and Sussex County is critical. For example, in New Castle County the Middletown schools occupy the old academy building,¹ which, while good enough in its day, is wholly inadequate for present purposes; ventilation and lighting are particularly bad. At New Castle the public schools are housed partly in the city hall, partly in the old United States arsenal, partly in the old academy building, and partly in a two room building (one room above the other). Not one of these buildings is fit for school use. Similarly at Newark, the primary school occupies an old brick structure with inadequate lighting and ventilation; the grammar grades occupy a building lately erected, of pleasing exterior, but bad interior, while the high school occupies the old academy building, long since outgrown, which is a fire trap, poorly ventilated and lighted.

The situation in Sussex County is quite as critical. For example, at Georgetown, Laurel, and Seaford the buildings are old, rambling, wooden structures, which have been added to from time to time. Lighting and ventilation are bad, and the fire hazard, serious. This is particularly true at Seaford.²

In certain instances the situation is complicated by the fact that buildings which should at this moment be

¹See illustration opposite page 66.

²See illustration opposite page 70.

either altered or replaced are still unpaid for. At Milford \$25,000 was borrowed when the present structure was erected, not one penny of which has been liquidated. Similarly at Newark, \$10,000 was borrowed when the present grammar school was built, all still outstanding; in fact, there has never been interest enough at Newark even to complete this building, the children being permitted year after year to walk through a muddy, unfinished basement. With the exceptions noted, the building condition in the larger towns and cities demands immediate action.

Poor organization, inadequate supervision, ill prepared teachers, conventional programs, poor school buildings and equipment—these untoward conditions are all reflected in the quality of the classroom instruction. In Delaware, as elsewhere, there is here and there a born teacher, who, rising above her surroundings, does good work; but such teachers do not redeem a situation which may in general terms be characterized as highly unsatisfactory.

In the course of the field work, in round terms a hundred one room rural schools, white and colored, were visited. Of the entire number only one could be called really good. The physical surroundings of this school at the time when the present teacher was engaged were altogether unfavorable. The schoolhouse, located on a small lot, is one of the few old stone buildings still standing,¹ and its furnishings were of obsolete type. The new

¹See illustration opposite page 78.

teacher, now in the third year of her service, persuaded the district school committee to give her the \$10 usually spent at the beginning of the year to put the schoolhouse in order. With this \$10 she employed a woman to clean the schoolhouse, and with the help of an interested patron tastefully calcimined the interior of the building. Later, an entertainment provided funds for window shades and sash curtains. A carnival reseated the schoolhouse with single, adjustable desks. Another entertainment purchased an unabridged dictionary and dictionary holder. The local grange lent an organ. Thus, within two years, the entire interior of this old stone building was transformed into a cosy workroom.

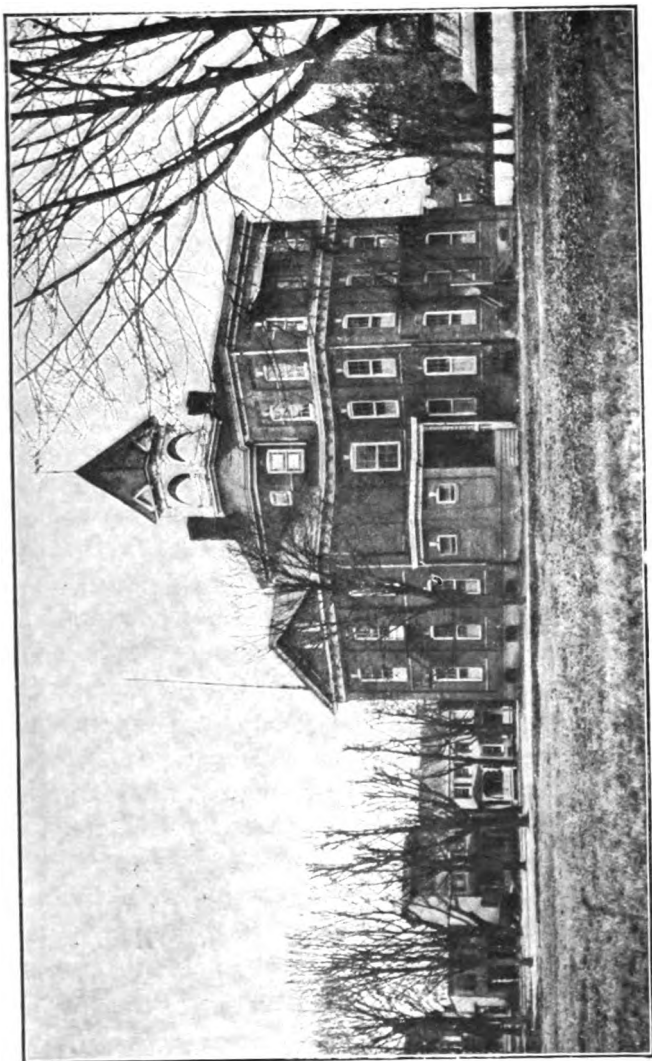
Perhaps a fourth of the rural schools visited give a good type of old-fashioned instruction. The children are rigorously held to their texts; no use is made of the experiences gained at home, on the farm, or in their environment; nevertheless the pupils are in a fair way to master a substantial body of information and are receiving what would formerly have been called a good elementary schooling.

The remaining rural schools are poor. The teachers, after one or two and occasionally three years in the neighboring high school, merely go through the motions of school keeping. It must be admitted that war conditions, as well as influenza, have this fall disorganized the schools to an unusual degree. Yet, so far as the work observed is concerned, very little difference could be perceived in the schools in question between the quality of

the instruction of teachers who had just entered the service or who had returned after an absence of some years and the instruction of teachers who had been continuously in service.

Nor is the poor quality of the instruction due altogether to inadequate supervision. The professional preparation of many of these teachers is so defective that even good supervision will not make good teachers of them. The first recourse in such a situation must be to more and better training. Even assuming better training, better supervision, and consolidation as far as possible, the problem of such one room schools as remain is not easy. One teacher is compelled to handle in the course of the day pupils belonging to each of the eight elementary grades. The school day is accordingly divided into twenty or thirty recitation periods, varying from ten to fifteen minutes in length. Under such conditions, the best teachers can do little more than hear children recite. Now, a study of the enrollment in rural schools shows that a great majority of the children are in the lower classes, with one or two pupils, seldom more, in each of the uppermost two grades.¹ Frequently one third of the entire school day is given to the instruction of three or four advanced pupils, to the obvious neglect of the younger children. If the usual work of the district schools were confined to the first six grades, and provision made for all pupils who have completed the

¹For example, in Kent County, of a rural school enrollment in 1917-18 of 2,495, only 338, or 14 per cent., were in the seventh and eighth grades.



Conventional Town School of Poorer Type



sixth grade to attend the nearest graded school, such pupils would be thrown in contact with more children of their own age and the rural teacher would be able to concentrate her attention and energies on the children of the lower grades. Some such rearrangement of the work of the rural schools is much to be desired. The payment at the present time by the state of the tuition in neighboring graded schools of a limited number of pupils who have completed the sixth grade in their home school is a step in this direction.

In respect to quality of instruction, the situation in the larger towns is better. Yet, the best that can be said of their elementary schools is that they do a fair type of old-fashioned, formal, textbook work; the children master the tools of learning—reading, writing, and arithmetic—and devote some time to the study of physiology and hygiene, geography and history. But even in these schools the instruction is formal and bookish; it appeals almost entirely to the memory, little or nothing being done to train the senses, cultivate observation, or to develop the imagination.

High school instruction is of the same bookish type. Small provisions are made for the teaching of science, the household and industrial arts, and, with the exception of one or two schools, there are neither laboratories nor gymnasiums. The preparation of the high school teachers is far from adequate; the high schools themselves are unsatisfactorily organized. The amount of instruction offered too frequently depends, not on the qualifications

of the instructors or the extent of the facilities, but on the pride or ambition of the local board. Thus a four year course is sometimes given where prudence would hardly attempt more than two or, at most, three years' work; and not infrequently, two or three years of high school work are offered where the conditions suggest distinctly less.

It is not necessary in this connection to give an elaborate account of this situation or to detail the different measures required if it is to be improved. We need here emphasize only two points: (1) A state high school system cannot be developed if everything is left to the local initiative of small areas. There must be a central guiding and coördinating authority, which, while leaving abundant opportunity for local action, will nevertheless be capable in one place of restraining excessive ambition, in another of stimulating backward sentiment, and everywhere of upholding creditable standards. (2) High schools cannot be altogether financed by local taxation. The problem is indeed not altogether a local problem; the state at large has a distinct interest in the creation of a sound high school system—an interest which should manifest itself in financial coöperation. Rapid progress on a sound basis would doubtless take place if these two suggestions were incorporated in the law—if, that is, the state defined and supervised secondary education towards the support of which it made a stimulating financial contribution.

The foregoing description and discussion have had ref-

erence mainly to schools for white children. Conditions as respects colored children do not differ materially. The buildings are as a rule still more unsatisfactory,¹ the instruction nowhere goes beyond the elementary grades; in quality there is little to choose.

On the whole, therefore, public education in Delaware is at a low ebb. Public opinion is unaroused; professional standards are as yet unformed; the state organization, despite certain good features, is ill jointed and ineffective. The laws need to be rounded out, so as to give the state an organization the various parts of which play into each other effectually; policies must be framed on larger lines; coöperation between the state and the county unit must be brought out; proper provisions for teacher training must be made; the state, the county and the local community must join in raising the larger sums required to sustain creditable schools, adapted to the needs, capacity, and opportunities of the school children of Delaware.

¹See illustration opposite page 84.

VIII. ENROLLMENT AND ATTENDANCE

THE purpose of the public school is to pass every child of the state through a complete elementary, if not a high school, course. As yet no system of public schools has by any means realized this purpose. The extent to which a system succeeds is indicated (1) by its success in enrolling children, (2) by the regularity of their attendance, and (3) by their progress through the schools.

The ideal school population, that is, the children that should be in school, would include all children from six to eighteen years of age inclusive. However, in Delaware, as in a number of other states, the compulsory period ends with the pupil's fourteenth birthday. Attendance after fourteen being voluntary, it is difficult for the schools to hold children of high school age.

If we could compare the number of children in Delaware in each age group between six and eighteen (inclusive) with the number of children of each age group in school, we should know the extent to which the schools reach the children of the state. Unfortunately for our purposes, Delaware has no school census,¹ that is, no one knows the total number of children in the state

¹The State Council of Defense is now taking such a census.

who are six years of age seven years of age, eight years of age, etc., so that no one knows how many children of each age the schools should enroll. We do, however, know approximately the number of children enrolled during the school year 1917-18. The total enrollment, exclusive of Wilmington, was 24,163¹—in incorporated districts, 9,084, in rural districts, 10,600, and in colored schools, 4,479.

On the basis of these data, it appears that the school enrollment in 1917-18 was not so large by 774 as that of 1912-13, for in 1912-13, according to an unpublished report of the commissioner of education, the total enrollment was 24,937—in incorporated districts, 8,299, in rural districts, 11,769, and in colored schools, 4,869. This represents a total decrease of 3 per cent., for, while there was a gain in the incorporated districts of 9 per cent., there was a loss in rural districts of 10 per cent. and in colored schools of 8 per cent. Undoubtedly there were at least as many children in the state in 1917-18 as there were in 1912-13; hence, the difference in the enrollment represents the failure of the schools to attract the children. War conditions in 1917-18 ought perhaps to be taken into account in connection with this showing.

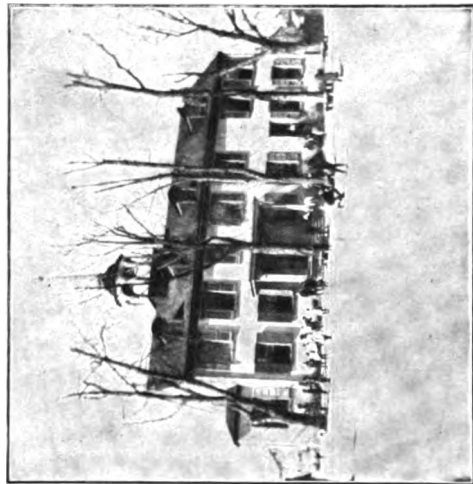
The data in hand make clear that Delaware schools fail to reach large numbers of white children of certain age groups. For example, there were enrolled in 1917-18

¹This includes 669 children, the estimated enrollment of schools not reporting, based on reports of preceding years.

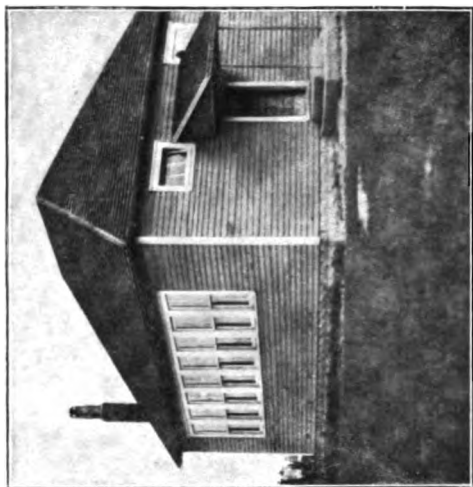
2,013 white children ten years of age.¹ There were probably in the state just as many white children eleven, twelve, and thirteen years of age as there were children ten years of age. Since the compulsory school law extends to the fourteenth year, there ought to be in the schools approximately as many eleven, twelve, and thirteen year old children as there are ten year old children. But such is not the case. The numbers drop from 2,013 ten year olds to 1,874 eleven year olds and 1,712 thirteen year olds. Curiously enough, the number of twelve year olds in attendance (1,958) is but little below the number of ten year olds.

Beyond fourteen years of age, the drop is rapid. The white schools enrolled in 1917-18, 1,568 children fourteen years of age; but the number of white children fifteen years of age dropped to 1,114; of sixteen years of age, to 669; of seventeen years of age, to 383; and of eighteen years of age and older, to 198, with 47 of unknown age. The white schools—to say nothing of the colored—thus fail to reach at least 22 per cent. of the children fourteen years of age, 45 per cent. of the children fifteen years of age, 67 per cent. of the children sixteen years of age, 81 per cent. of the children seventeen years of age, and 90 per cent. of the children eighteen years of age. In other words, taking the white schools, as a whole, only 78 per cent. of the children are held in school long enough, even if they attended regularly and progressed at the usual rate, to complete an eighth grade education, only 55 per

¹See Appendix, Table XI, page 107.



Old Academy Used for Public School



Attempt at Proper Lighting



cent. long enough to complete the ninth grade, only 33 per cent. long enough to complete the tenth grade, only 19 per cent. long enough to complete the eleventh grade, and only 10 per cent. long enough to complete the high school.¹

Actually, nothing like these proportions advance so far. In the first place, large numbers of children of high school age, that is, children fifteen years of age and older, are in the elementary schools of both the incorporated and rural districts. In fact, 760 out of the 1,114 children fifteen years of age, 368 of the 669 sixteen years of age, 178 of the 383 seventeen years of age, and 67 out of the 198 eighteen years of age, or more than half of all the children now in school of high school age are still doing grade work, to the detriment of the younger children in these schools and to their own great disadvantage. It naturally follows that the high schools are enrolling less than half of all white children now in school of high school age, to say nothing of the number of children of high school age out of school altogether.

In the second place, even of those who do get into high school, few ever reach the fourth or last year. The high school enrollment, by years, in 1917-18 was as follows:

1st year.	601
2nd year	347
3d year	242
4th year	116
Total	1,306

¹These per cents. would probably be slightly higher if we knew the ages of the 669 omitted.

The heavy loss from year to year is in part due to the fact that, of the 44 incorporated districts, only 15 support four year high schools. Whatever the cause, there are only 116 fourth year high school pupils in the whole state outside of Wilmington. As pointed out before, there are probably more than 2,013 children old enough to be in this grade, which means that at the present time approximately only one child out of 17 actually reaches the final year of the public school.

The failure of more children to advance further in the schools is due not only to the fact that the schools do not reach all the children of the state and that high school facilities are limited, but also to the fact that the children are neither continuous nor regular in attendance. For example, the white schools in incorporated districts were in session during 1917-18, on the average, 175 days; pupils were enrolled, on the average, 148 days, and attended, on the average, 127 days. The rural schools were in session, on the average, 151 days; pupils were enrolled, on the average, 111 days, and attended, on the average, 84 days. The colored schools were in session, on the average, 140 days; pupils were enrolled, on the average, 102 days, and attended, on the average, 65 days.

White children living in incorporated districts thus have opportunity to attend school 24 days longer each year than white rural children, and all white children longer than colored children. Moreover, the white children of incorporated districts actually attended, in

1917-18, on the average, 43 days more than the white children of rural districts, while the colored children were in school, on the average, 19 days less than the white rural children. These conditions are fatal to thorough work and to satisfactory progress.

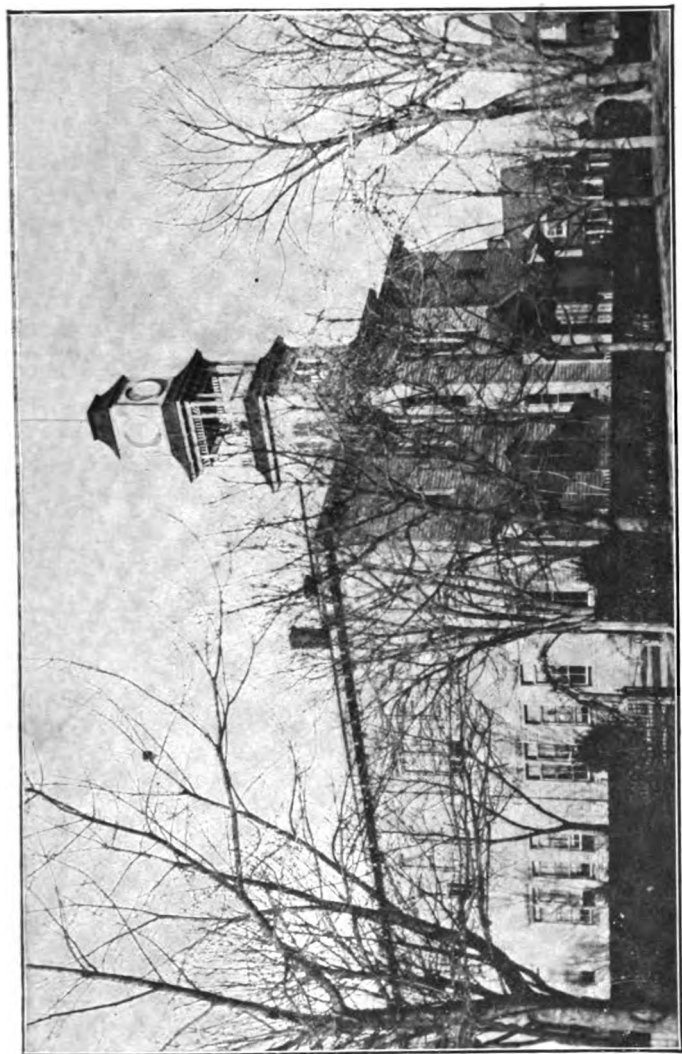
With attendance so poor, it is little wonder that so few children advance far enough. An illustration will make clear their handicap. The ordinary elementary course covers eight years. The course counts on a school year of not less than 180 days, with 90 per cent. of attendance, or a total minimum attendance of 1,296 days. On this basis, with attendance in Delaware as it now is, it would take children of the incorporated districts on the average about ten years, of rural districts something over fifteen years, and colored children about twenty years to complete a standard elementary course. In consequence, the average child in Delaware actually completes nothing like a full elementary course of study.

Delaware has, it is true, a compulsory school attendance law, requiring on its face that all children between the ages of seven and fourteen should attend school continuously for at least five months each year, enrolling not later than one month after the schools open. Unfortunately, however, local boards are permitted to reduce the compulsory period to three months, and an astonishing number take advantage of this provision. Out of 328 separate white districts, over a half, or 166, limit the compulsory period to less than five months, and 115, or 35 per cent., have only three months. It is

worthy of note, however, that, without legal compulsion, 11 districts increased the period beyond five months.¹ But whatever the length of the compulsory period, under present conditions the compulsory law is not and cannot be enforced. For example, in Kent County the average number of days attended by boys in one room rural schools having a three months' compulsory period was 69 days; in one room rural schools having a four months' compulsory period, 68 days; and in one room rural schools having a five months' compulsory period, 72 days. As stated before, the enforcement of the compulsory attendance law is in the hands of the clerks of the local boards, the county superintendents, and the teachers. There is not an attendance officer in all the state. In consequence, the compulsory education law of Delaware is practically a dead letter.

Not without relation to poor attendance is the absence in Delaware of provision for medical inspection. While no reliable data are available, there is no reason to suppose that physical defects and contagious diseases, both of which interrupt regular attendance, are less common in Delaware than in other states. In towns and cities where medical inspection has been provided, schools are rarely closed on account of the simpler infectious ailments—whooping cough, measles, chicken pox, etc.; in Delaware, however, the schools have not infrequently to be closed for weeks at a time on account of these diseases.

¹See Appendix, Table XII, page 108.



Typical Old Frame Town School



The correctives for the unsatisfactory situation as respects enrollment and attendance are three: (1) The school year should be equalized by lengthening the term in all white and in all colored rural schools to at least 180 days of actual session; (2) the present compulsory school attendance law should be materially modified and attendance officers provided; and (3) medical inspection should be authorized.

One important implication of these measures needs special emphasis. The lengthened school year goes with the improved training of teachers. As long as 147 out of 335 white districts and 73 out of 88 colored districts have a school year of only seven months,¹ it is impossible to obtain well trained teachers, for while the monthly salary may be fairly good, the total annual salary is too small to warrant superior training or to hold persons of vigorous endowment. To make teaching in Delaware an occupation attractive to well trained teachers, the school year must be extended and thus the annual return increased.

¹See Appendix, Table II, page 99.



IX. FINANCING THE SCHOOLS

FOR the kind of education just described, what does Delaware pay?

The total current expenditure in 1917-1918 on all the schools of the state was about \$437,253.18.¹ This sum does not include interest, debt payment, and expenditure for permanent improvement. It was distributed as follows:

TYPE OF SCHOOL	ANNUAL CURRENT EXPENDITURE	ANNUAL CURRENT COST PER PUPIL ENROLLED	ANNUAL CUR- RENT COST PER PUPIL IN AVERAGE DAILY ATTENDANCE
Incorporated Schools	\$233,544.65	\$25.71	\$85.50
Rural Schools.....	166,581.72	15.72	28.86
Colored Schools.....	37,126.81	8.29	17.75
Total.....	\$437,253.18	\$18.10	\$80.06

• The current cost, when based on enrollment, runs, it will be noted, from \$26 per pupil in incorporated districts down to \$16 per pupil in rural districts, and down to \$8 per pupil in colored schools. When based on

¹See Appendix, Table XIII, page 108a.

average daily attendance, the current per pupil cost runs from \$36 in incorporated schools to \$18 in colored schools. The gap between current cost figured on the basis of enrollment and current cost figured on the basis of attendance is unusually wide, owing to the very poor school attendance.

The marked differences in the current expenditures on schools of different types indicate, in general, the differences in the educational opportunities which town, rural, and colored children respectively enjoy. Thus it is evident that the educational opportunities of white children in the towns are probably a fifth better than the educational opportunities of rural white children, while the opportunities of all white children are decidedly superior to those of colored children. Even the highest per capita expenditure—that in the incorporated schools of towns—is low; and when the cost of the different types of schools is combined, the average per pupil expenditure is very low. That is, Delaware buys a low and cheap brand of education. Probably not more than seven other states spend so little on education¹ as Delaware. It is, however, still true that Delaware pays high for what it gets. Indeed, it is difficult to see how a state could get less for its money.

As stated above, the reported expenditures for 1917-18 are approximate only. They are approximate because

¹See Report of the U. S. Commissioner of Education, 1917, Vol. II, page 82.

complete and accurate financial data do not exist. Full data for the preceding school year are supposed to be in the office of the state auditor not later than the last of September. But under the present system the financial accounts of the 424 separate school districts cannot be audited within the time limit set by the law. There are always a few delinquents. For example, as late as the first week of November of this year (1918), there were 15 districts with which the auditor had not settled. To ascertain approximately Delaware's expenditure on public education in 1917-18 we were therefore compelled to substitute the expenditures of an earlier year in the case of the 15 districts not reporting. On the other hand, there were 11 white and 10 colored teachers from whom the commissioner of education had for 1917-18 no data on enrollment and attendance; in these instances we also substituted the enrollment and attendance reported for earlier years. These substitutions, while probably not affecting materially the reported cost of the schools, reveal the disorderly conditions that prevail. On no single feature of the state educational system are full and reliable data available.

The funds for the support of local schools are derived partly from the state and partly from local taxation and incidental local sources. Such money as the state apportions to the several school districts is raised by indirect taxation, Delaware being one of the few states which levy no direct state school tax. Like most of our states, Delaware has a permanent school fund,

which amounts to \$944,407. It yields an annual income of about \$42,000. This sum is supplemented by an annual legislative appropriation from the general treasury of the state, which, for 1917-18, amounted to \$142,000.¹

The state distributed in 1917-18 to the several districts, exclusive of Wilmington, \$138,190.02, an amount equal to 31 per cent. of the total current cost of the schools.² These state funds may be used for two purposes only—payment of teachers' salaries, and purchase of textbooks, which are provided free in all schools.

State funds are apportioned on the basis of the number of teachers in service. A district employing one teacher in 1917-18 received one portion or \$188,³ a district employing two teachers, two portions or twice the amount, and so on. The practice of basing the state apportionment on the number of teachers has exercised an unfortunate influence on educational progress. Formerly it tended to multiply the number of districts; now it proves a bar to school consolidation. On other accounts also, this method of distributing the state fund is objectionable, for it disregards the number of pupils to be instructed and all differences in the financial

¹This appropriation has now been increased to \$250,000. The \$142,000 is exclusive of \$22,000 for the tuition of outside pupils, and other small appropriations for specific objects.

²See Appendix, Table XIV, page 109.

³For the present year, 1918-19, owing to the increased appropriation of the state, the apportionment per teacher is about \$300.

ability of different districts. A rich district with few pupils receives as much from the state as a poor district with many pupils. State funds should be apportioned so as to equalize both educational opportunities and financial burdens.

The present method of apportioning the state fund is further objectionable in that it fails to encourage high school development. It is of course true that the elementary school is fundamental and should come first. On the other hand, a state that lacks well equipped, well manned, and well located high schools possesses at most only part of a state school system. In Delaware high schools are in especial need of the state's fostering care, because they are likely to be small, and if left without generous aid will probably be weak. The law does indeed provide that rural pupils who have completed the sixth grade may under certain conditions attend neighboring graded schools at the state's expense. The amount thus received by the graded schools and high schools of incorporated districts in 1917-18 was \$20,247.25, equal to 8 per cent. of the total current expenditure of the incorporated districts.¹ This additional sum is, however, not enough, as now employed, to relieve the situation.

There is, therefore, the very greatest need of adopting in Delaware a method of apportioning state funds which recognizes the differing needs of elementary school and

¹See Appendix, Table XIV, page 109.

high school. State funds for elementary schools should be apportioned to the several local school units on a double basis—the basis, first, of the number of children of elementary school age enrolled, that is, between six and fourteen years of age, inclusive, and the basis, second, of school attendance. In recognizing the number of children to be instructed, the state takes account of the amount of work that needs to be done; in recognizing actual school attendance, the state takes account of the work really accomplished and at the same time stimulates the community to keep its children in school. State aid to high schools should be granted on the basis of the cost of maintaining high schools of a given grade and rank. For example, the state should make a fixed grant to a district maintaining a 20 unit high school having a specified equipment and employing a given number of teachers of specified preparation; a fixed grant of less amount to a 15 unit high school fulfilling given requirements as to equipment and teachers; and still less to a 10 unit high school. Moreover, this aid should be given also with a view to bringing a high school education within reach of all children without tuition cost to the parents; now only a limited number of children from each county may so attend.

As stated above, the second source of school support is local taxation. In 1917-18, local taxation provided in the state, outside of Wilmington, 60 per cent. of current school receipts: in incorporated districts, 63 per cent.; in rural districts, 63 per cent.; and in colored districts,

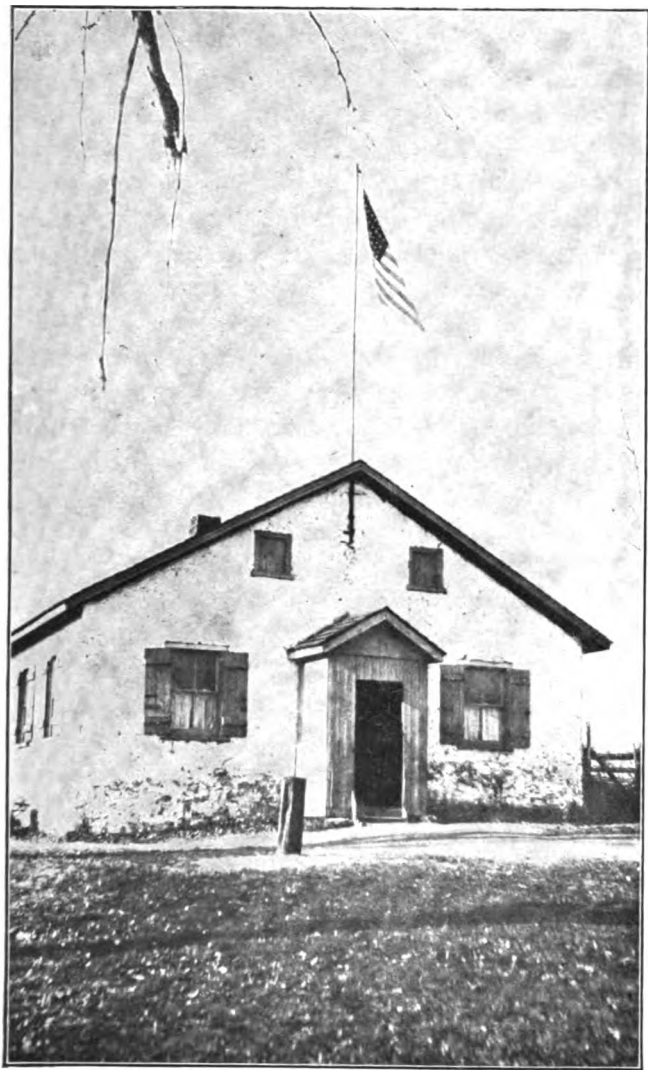
33 per cent.¹ The state, it will be noted, is the main support of colored schools. Even the incorporated districts and the rural districts provide an unusually small proportion of the total current cost of their schools. This proportion is probably even lower now, for, as pointed out above, the state recently greatly increased its appropriation, without imposing any obligations whatsoever on local authorities to do more for themselves.

Local taxation is of two kinds—a head or capitation tax, and a property tax. The law requires a minimum capitation tax of \$2 annually on each male inhabitant of the school district twenty-one years of age. The capitation tax ranges from \$2 to \$6 and produces a considerable proportion of the school funds raised locally; what proportion of the whole is thus raised we cannot say, as data are lacking. A capitation tax is, however, not a desirable source of local school revenue; it is too fluctuating and too difficult to collect. For these reasons, this tax should not be permanently relied on for school purposes.

The property tax for school purposes is levied on both real and personal property. The financial resources of districts having a one teacher white school vary enormously—from an assessed property value of \$45,553 to an assessed value of \$589,000.² Inasmuch as all districts receive per teacher the same amount of state aid,

¹See Appendix, Table XIV, page 109.

²See Appendix, Table XV, page 108b.



Old Stone Rural School



the rates of local taxation must necessarily differ greatly. As a matter of fact, they range, in white rural districts, from 7 cents to 85 cents on the hundred dollars, and in incorporated districts, from 20 cents to 90 cents on the hundred dollars.¹ The totals raised locally vary correspondingly; one district raises \$100, the minimum permitted by law, another raises nine times as much for the same purpose. Obviously, a system which permits such inequalities cannot be sound.

Two changes are required: (1) Boards of education must be financially independent and must be vested with power enough to finance efficient schools; (2) the state must compel adequate local action. As the situation now stands, the state requires local school boards to levy not less than \$100 per teacher annually—an arbitrary and entirely inadequate requirement; it also provides that for certain violations—such, for example, as not keeping the schools open at least 140 days a year, failure of the district school clerks to settle with the state auditor, etc.—the whole or a part of the state apportionment may be withheld. But these penalties are almost never imposed. Besides, the principle involved is wrong. If the children of the state are to be safeguarded in their educational rights, the separate district units cannot be left free to follow their own preferences. The state should impose upon all local boards, whether county boards or boards of education of separate districts, requirements which they must fulfill on

¹See Appendix, Table IV, page 101.

pain of being declared delinquent, these requirements being such as will guarantee the establishment and maintenance of good schools. In other words, the interests of the state and the welfare of the children are to be safeguarded not by withholding, in case of local delinquency, the aid of the state, but by imposing upon the communities certain minimum financial responsibilities and by acting directly on the proper local officials if these requirements are not fulfilled.

Educational inequality of still another kind exists in Delaware. For purposes of taxation, Delaware has two school systems. Local taxes for white schools are levied on the person and property of white citizens; local taxes for colored schools are levied on the person and property of colored citizens. This practice is clearly undemocratic. In apportioning its own funds the state makes no such distinction; it ought not to countenance any such distinction in respect to local taxation. Nowhere else in the United States does this practice prevail. It is absolutely indefensible.

Finally, there remain certain features of the old tax system that should be eradicated. For example, the clerks of the local school boards still make up the tax duplicate for their respective districts, and collect the school taxes. There are, accordingly, some 424 school tax collectors in the state, each getting 8 or 10 per cent. of the amounts collected after the 10th of August; persons who pay their school taxes before August 10th get a discount of 8 per cent. The amount received by any

one collector is not large, and there are clerks who take nothing for this service. Of those taking the fees, the average in 130 one teacher districts reporting was, in 1917-18, for Kent County, \$20; for New Castle County, \$15; and for Sussex County, \$18.¹ Yet the aggregate amounts to several thousand dollars. Economy and efficiency alike require that school taxes should be collected as other local taxes are collected, without the intervention of a special army of school tax collectors. Under a county system of school organization, it is easy to centralize school tax collection. The county school board would make the levy for all the schools, white and colored, under its jurisdiction, and the taxes so levied would be collected by the county collector; in the few separate districts provided for, the local board of education would make the levy for all the schools, white and colored, under its jurisdiction, and this levy would be collected by the collector of other municipal taxes.

To summarize, the present financial support of Delaware schools is inadequate, school tax burdens are unequal, school support uneven, and the present system of school taxation undemocratic. These undesirable conditions will persist so long as the state allows practically unrestricted freedom to small local units. A sound system will not hamper local initiative; but it will begin by requiring that the local unit should at least do its duty. In apportioning state funds, the state

¹See Appendix, Table XVI, page 108c.

should seek to equalize educational opportunities and school tax burdens, taking into consideration the differences between the elementary school and the high school. Finally, if Delaware is to have good schools, it is certain that the amount of local financial support must be greatly increased; it may also prove necessary for the state to increase its appropriations. Let it not be forgotten that improved education cannot be obtained without expense; let it also be remembered that the states which hold their own people and attract immigration are not the states that have low taxes and poor schools, but rather those that have good schools for which the people are glad to tax themselves to the limit of their resources.

X. CONCLUSIONS

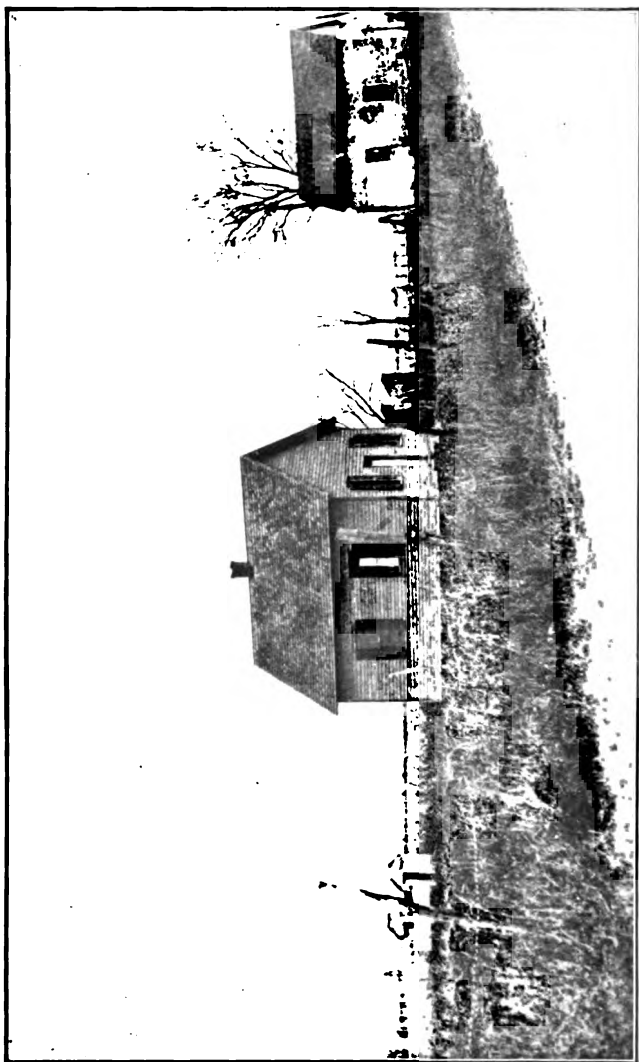
IN THE course of the preceding chapters we have, in describing and criticizing present conditions, also indicated the nature of the changes required. In the present chapter, these suggestions will be brought together in order that the reader may obtain a clear view of the reorganization that is, in our judgment, imperative.

The state board of education should become a lay board to which persons officially connected as officers or trustees with institutions affected by its action should be ineligible. The board's function should be, not itself directly to manage or administer the schools, but to determine large questions of policy and to select agents whom it should hold to strict accountability. The board should choose the commissioner of education, who should be its executive officer. The principle on which the powers and duties of the board and the commissioner should be allotted is clear. Matters relating to government and legislation belong to the board; everything having to do with the execution of the will of the board, such as the inspection, supervision, and administration of the schools, belongs to the commissioner of education, subject to the board's authority and approval. A thoroughgoing revision of the school laws in strict conformity with this

principle will localize responsibility, facilitate the work of the commissioner of education, and free the board from the necessity of taking up technical details. The relation sought would be analogous to that existing between a board of directors and the manager of a business corporation. Like the board of directors, the state board would establish controlling policies; like the business manager, the commissioner of education would be responsible for the conduct of the schools in conformity with these policies.

The state board of education should be empowered to fix the salary of the commissioner and of subordinates selected on his recommendation and working under him. Its funds should be sufficient to cover the necessary incidental expenses of the board members, to provide suitable office quarters, equipment, and clerical assistance, and to prepare such publications as are necessary to inform the state of its work and of the condition and needs of the schools.

The powers of the state board need to be increased in other important respects. For example, the board is now authorized to withhold the whole or a part of the state dividend in case local school officials fail to comply with the law or with its rules and regulations. But, as we have pointed out, the laws, as well as the regulations of the board, are now violated with impunity. Meanwhile, the state distributes its dividends regardless of whether the law is enforced or broken. The remedy is obvious: The state board should be authorized in such



Typical Colored School



cases, on the recommendation of the commissioner of education, to remove the offending officials from office.

The state board should also be empowered to fix the grade of work that schools may attempt. The instruction in one teacher schools should probably be limited, where possible, to the first six grades. It may also prove important at times to limit the work undertaken in villages and towns. Many a village and town school, spurred by local pride, is now unduly expanded. Where this occurs, it would be in the interest of sound education to restrict the courses offered and to arrange to procure for the pupils further opportunities in other schools within reach.

Again, the state board should be vested with full powers over the examination and certification of teachers, county superintendents, supervisors, principals, and attendance officers. Under this arrangement, the higher certificates would usually be issued on the basis of satisfactory evidence of qualifications and experience, while the examinations of elementary teachers would be held, as now, at stated intervals, at the county seats of the respective counties. The questions would be prepared and the answers read by the state commissioner of education and his assistants, while the county superintendents would merely conduct the examinations and certify to the character of the applicants. Applicants would not be inconvenienced by the centralization of authority, while uniformity of standard would thus be established.

Finally, the school building situation in Delaware, as pointed out, is critical. Even of the newer school buildings, some are very good and some are very poor; but whether a new building is well planned or not is now a matter of accident. To introduce system where chance now rules, the state board should receive authority to prescribe regulations governing the building of school-houses, and the state commissioner, as its executive officer, should be required, after examining plans and specifications, to give written approval before building contracts become valid. Moreover, the state board, on the written recommendation of the commissioner of education, should be vested with authority to condemn school buildings where they are obviously a menace to the health and safety of the children.

In this, as in all other respects, the state board should act through its executive officer, the commissioner of education, but the resources at the disposal of the commissioner of education, inadequate at present, need to be extended as well as specialized, if the office is to be made efficient. The staff of the state department should be increased to include, at the very least, two stenographers, a clerk to be in charge of reports, and an assistant to be in charge of educational statistics and special studies. There should also be a reasonable allowance for office equipment, office supplies, printing, and traveling expenses.

The proposed program is not elaborate; if it seem so that is because the present organization is so utterly in-

adequate. The expense of conducting the state department should be regarded as an overhead charge, incurred for the purpose of getting better results from the state's present school expenditure. If we assume that the sum is \$15,000 a year, let it be remembered that this is the most economical way of making sure that the half million dollars raised by the state and locally are effectively employed. This is economy in the best and largest sense of the word.

A strengthened state department of education would avail little unless accompanied by a reconstructed and strengthened local educational organization. To this end, the county should be made the local administrative unit, at the head of which should be placed a county school board, with large educational and financial powers, and with an adequate professional staff. The more populous and wealthy centers should be erected into separate school districts, on condition that they fulfill certain requirements as to the grade of schools to be maintained, the grounds, buildings, and equipment to be provided, the preparation of the teachers to be employed, and the administrative direction and supervision to be supplied. Such a qualified county system permits the larger towns to enjoy a measure of local autonomy, and at the same time secures to the smaller towns, villages, and open country the benefits of a centralized organization.

Under a county school system, the county board of education represents local educational interests. That the people may have a direct voice in the control and

development of their schools, the county board of education should be elected by the people; but tenure should be so arranged as to give stability to the board and continuity to its policy. If members of the county board are chosen at the time of the general county election, they should be voted for on a separate ballot without partisan designations.

Even under a county system, there will still be need in rural sections of local school trustees, but these should be appointed by the county board and have restricted powers.

The educational powers of the county board, subject to the general law and the rules and regulations of the state board, should cover the making of rules and regulations applicable to the conduct of the schools under local conditions, the adaptation to local needs of courses of study outlined by the state department, and the selection, appointment, and assignment of teachers, on the nomination of the superintendent. The powers of the local trustees over principals and teachers should be limited to filing written charges with the county board in case of dissatisfaction, while the dismissal in each case should be ordered on the recommendation of the county superintendent, with the approval of the county board. Local pride and interest must, indeed, be cultivated, but these are in the end best subserved by those measures that make for school efficiency.

On the other hand, the county boards must be vested with financial power adequate to enable them to estab-

lish and maintain satisfactory schools; that is, they must be put in position to do their duty by the schools. At the present time there is scarcely a school in the state which is not suffering from unjustifiable lack of funds. To give county boards adequate financial powers does not mean needless expenditure of public money. School boards elected by the people are just as amenable to local influences as other bodies. They cannot go faster than local sentiment approves or local resources allow.

To be effective, the newly established county boards of education must be provided with an adequate professional staff, made up of a well trained county superintendent, qualified supervisors, and attendance officers. No one should be eligible to appointment as county superintendent unless he be a college graduate, who has had at least five years of experience in the elementary schools and not less than one year of professional graduate work in an approved university, specializing in educational administration and supervision. The appointee should also be required to procure a certificate from the commissioner of education and his appointment should bear the commissioner's written approval. The term of the county superintendent should be at least four years, and his salary should not be permitted to fall below a given minimum.

The county superintendent should bear full responsibility for the conduct of the schools in conformity with the state laws. He should have authority over the county courses of study, choice of textbooks from the

state list, school supplies, the grading of the schools, the examination and promotion of pupils, the admission of rural children into graded schools and into high schools, and the selection, employment, and placing of all teachers.

We have pointed out that the schools of Delaware suffer woefully from a lack of supervision. In fact, the schools in the open country and villages, and as a rule in the larger towns, are really not supervised at all. Well trained county superintendents will labor to little purpose unless provided with supervisory assistance. It should therefore be made mandatory upon each county to employ supervisors as follows: in Sussex County, not less than three; in Kent and New Castle counties, not less than two each, the counties being permitted to have as many more as may be locally thought desirable. To guard against incompetency, the supervisors employed should hold a certificate in supervision from the commissioner of education, based on academic and specialized professional training equivalent to graduation from college, and not less than three years of experience as a teacher in the elementary schools. They should receive a salary commensurate with the importance of their services.

Into schools thus improved the children of the state must be regularly and continuously brought. To this end, the state requires a genuine compulsory attendance law affecting all children old enough to go to school and all who have not completed the eight grades of the ele-

mentary school. But compulsory education does not enforce itself. Hence, the employment in each county of at least one attendance officer, whose qualifications are certified to and whose employment is approved by the state commissioner, should be made mandatory. To secure properly qualified persons for this important work, an adequate annual salary should be guaranteed.

Finally, in order that competent county educational officials may do the work awaiting them, decent quarters and a fair amount of office help are necessary. The state should, therefore, require county boards of education to provide satisfactory offices and office facilities, to employ adequate clerical assistance (at least one stenographer and statistical clerk), to provide means of travel and to bear all expenses necessary to the performance of official duties.

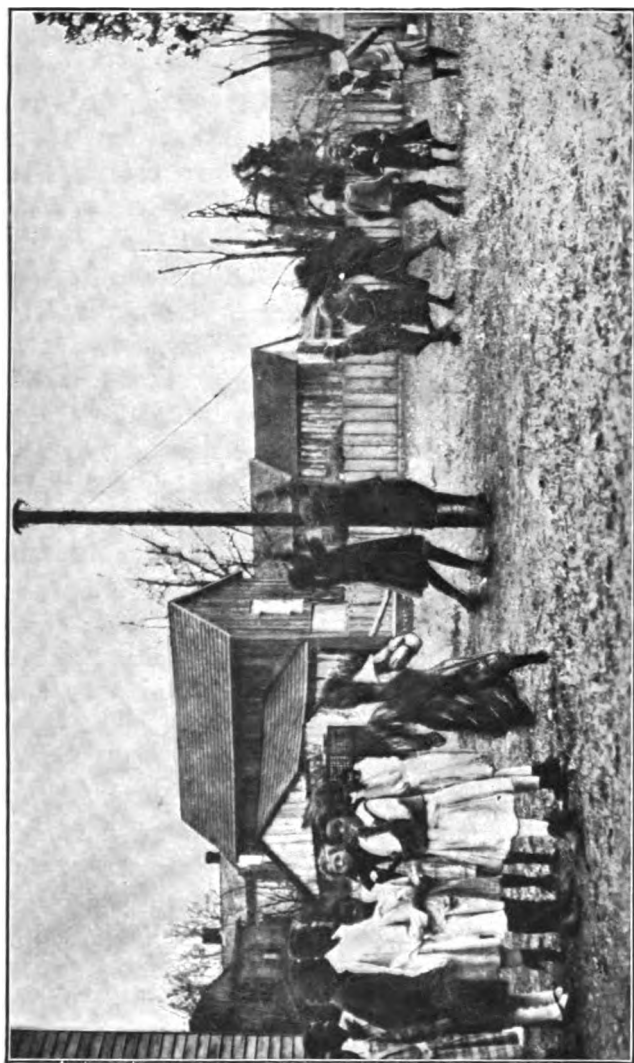
A county organization such as outlined involves the outlay in New Castle and Kent counties of approximately \$12,000 a year each, and in Sussex County, approximately \$14,000 a year, or a total for the three counties of \$38,000. Once more, however, this expenditure is made in order to obtain effective service from sums many times as great. To carry this overhead expense would be a heavy financial burden upon the counties. At the present time, the state bears the entire expense of the county boards and the county superintendents. It would, therefore, involve no new principle or precedent for the state to assume a part of the expense of the proposed county organization by bearing, for example,

the salary of the county superintendent, the supervisors, and the attendance officer.

As pointed out above, the adoption of the county system of organization is not inconsistent with making separate school districts out of the larger towns. These separate districts would have boards of education, elected by the people, with powers similar to those of the county boards. The authority to create separate districts should be vested in the state board of education, and these separate districts would be subject to its supervision. Towns erected into separate districts would continue as such so long as they met the requirements imposed by the law and the state board of education. On failure to meet these requirements, as revealed by state inspection, such towns would forfeit their privilege and their schools would automatically come under the control of the county board of education.

The foregoing changes in state, county, and local organization, and the proposed increased expenditures for professional administrative and supervisory assistance are all absolutely essential, and should, as soon as practicable, be followed by the making of proper provision for the training of elementary teachers, both white and colored. Delaware, as a sovereign state, cannot rely upon chance importation of trained teachers from the adjoining states—more especially as experience proves that it cannot even so obtain what it needs in respect to either number or quality.

These steps taken, it follows that the state board



Afternoon Recess



of education must be authorized to specify in terms of academic and professional training the conditions on which teachers' certificates may be granted, and the law must so circumscribe the granting of certificates that after a reasonable period of time they may be issued only to persons of satisfactory academic and professional preparation. Otherwise, certificates will continue to be issued, on the ground of expediency and temporary pressure, to the young, the inexperienced, and the ill trained.

Finally, a new method of distributing state funds should be introduced. In the first place, the state board of education should present to the governor, who would in turn transmit to the general assembly, a budget including, by items, all appropriations requested for public education. Conflict of interests would thus be avoided, and the part which the state is taking in the promotion and encouragement of public education would be made clear.

In the distribution of state dividends, a distinction should be made between the elementary and high schools. In apportioning state funds to elementary schools, two factors ought to be considered: (a) the school population between six and fourteen years of age, in so far as it is enrolled, and (b) school attendance. If the state's aid is based on school enrollment and attendance the state makes of its aid, as it should, a powerful lever in getting children into the school and in securing regular attendance.

A different principle is involved in aiding high schools. High schools, as suggested above, cost more than elementary schools, and the cost of high schools in Delaware is particularly high, because they are small and will doubtless continue to be small. Therefore, state aid to high schools should be distributed with direct reference to the cost of high school education. A certain specified sum should be allotted to first class high schools, that is, to those having four year courses; another amount to second class high schools, those having three year courses; and still another amount to third class high schools, those having two year courses.

There is a further important factor to be taken into account. A high school education should be within reach of every child in Delaware. While county boards of education should, as far as possible, develop high schools, the high schools of the state offering four year courses will of necessity be located mostly in the separate districts. Therefore, aid should be given with a view to making these high schools free and accessible to all the children of the county, county children being required to complete first the course as far as it goes offered by the high school nearest at hand.

The changes in the school laws of Delaware which we have suggested are at once obvious and fundamental. But we should in candor point out that even better laws do not of themselves make better schools. How much actual improvement results from the reorganization which we recommend will in the end depend on the

spirit in which this reorganization is effected. Politics, personal interest, local selfishness may go far to nullify the value of any reform. The new law will make good schools possible; Delaware will, however, obtain them only if the people of the state are seized with fresh interest and faith in education, only if they are thoroughly convinced that education is the most sacred and important of the state's functions, only if they are highly resolved that, whatever else Delaware does, the state will at least do what it is now conspicuously failing to do, namely, its plain duty to the children of the commonwealth.

APPENDIX

TABLE I
ATTENDANCE AT ANNUAL SCHOOL MEETINGS (WHITE), 1918

DISTRICT	NUMBER OF DISTRICTS REPORTING	AVERAGE NUMBER OF VOTERS IN DISTRICT	AVERAGE NUMBER VOTING AT ANNUAL MEETING	PER CENT. VOTING AT ANNUAL MEETING
Incorporated.	19	261	35	13
Rural.....	167	46	10	22
Total ¹	186	68	12	18

¹150 white districts missing.

TABLE II
DAYS SCHOOLS WERE IN SESSION IN DIFFERENT DISTRICTS, 1917-18

DISTRICT	DAYS SCHOOLS WERE IN SESSION						Average Number of Days in Session
	181 to 140	141 to 160	161 to 180	181 to 200	Unknown	Total	
Incorporated...	3	8	32	6		44	175
Rural.....	144	62	61	17	7	291	151
Colored.....	78	5	8		7	88	140
Total ¹	220	70	96	23	14	423	164

¹1 district missing.

TABLE III
CAPITATION TAX RATES, 1917-18

COUNTY AND DISTRICT	AMOUNTS LEVIED										Total
	\$2.00	\$2.50	\$3.00	\$3.50	\$4.00	\$4.50	\$5.00	\$5.50	\$6.00		
New Castle											
Incorporated.....	1		2		1	1	1		2	7	
Rural.....	32	6	5		4					48	
Colored.....	5	4	3	2						14	
Total.....	38	10	10	2	5	1	1		2	69	
Kent											
Incorporated.....	1	2			2	1	1		2	9	
Rural.....	37	11	5				1			54	
Colored.....	7	4	1		2					14	
Total.....	45	17	6		4	1	2		2	77	
Sussex											
Incorporated.....	1	1	1				3			6	
Rural.....	64	2	5		3					74	
Colored.....	9	3	2		1					15	
Total.....	74	6	8		4		3			95	
Incorporated.....	3	3	3			2	4		4	22	
Rural.....	133	19	15		3	7	2			176	
Colored.....	21	11	6	2	3					43	
Total ¹	157	33	24	2	13	2	6		4	241	

¹183 districts missing.

TABLE IV
PROPERTY SCHOOL TAX RATES, 1917-18

County and District	Cents Levied Per \$100																			Totals
	From 6 to 10 Cents	From 11 to 15 Cents	From 16 to 20 Cents	From 21 to 25 Cents	From 26 to 30 Cents	From 31 to 35 Cents	From 36 to 40 Cents	From 41 to 45 Cents	From 46 to 50 Cents	From 51 to 55 Cents	From 56 to 60 Cents	From 61 to 65 Cents	From 66 to 70 Cents	From 71 to 75 Cents	From 76 to 80 Cents	From 81 to 85 Cents	From 86 to 90 Cents	From 91 to 95 Cents	From 96 to 100 Cents	
New Castle																				
Incorporated.....			1	12	1	4	2		1		1		1	1						
Rural.....	5	7	16		3		1		1		1									
Colored.....	1								4			1						1		
Total.....	6	7	17	13	10	4	5		6		2	1	1	1				1		
Kent																				
Incorporated.....																				
Rural.....	1	10	11	13	9	6	3	1	1	1	2		1		1		1			
Colored.....				2	3		1													
Total.....	1	10	11	15	13	6	6	2	2	2	1		1		1					
Sussex																				
Incorporated.....			1																	
Rural.....	9	19	24	5	5	6	1	2	3	2	1		1	1		1		1		
Colored.....				3	2		3	1	2											
Total.....	9	19	25	8	7	7	6	3	7	2	1		2			1		1		
State																				
Incorporated.....			2																	
Rural.....	15	36	51	30	20	16	6	1	3	2	4		2	1		1	1			
Colored.....	1			6	8	5	2	2	5	1	2	1						2		
Total.....	16	36	53	36	30	17	17	5	15	3	8	1	4	1	1	1			2	

177 districts missing.

TABLE V
KINDS OF CERTIFICATES TEACHERS HOLD, 1918-19

TEACHERS IN	NUMBER HOLDING EACH KIND									
	Provi- sional	Limited Elemen- tary	Per- manent Ele- men- tary	Lim- ited Sec- ondary	Per- manent Sec- ondary	Nor- mal	Col- lege	Special	Un- known	TOTAL
High Schools.....	1	8		8	4	25	32	5	3	81
Elementary Schools										
Incorporated Districts	15	118	24	2		23	4	1	3	190
Rural Districts.....	58	201	14	1	1	10	1		5	291
Total.....	73	319	38	3	1	33	5	1	8	481
Colored Schools.....	6	36	1	3		19	13		11	89
Grand Total ¹	80	358	39	14	5	77	50	6	22	651

¹83 teachers missing.

TABLE VI
PREPARATION OF TEACHERS, 1918-19

TEACHERS IN	PREPARATION											Total	ATTENDED SUMMER SCHOOL 1918
	Elem. School Only	PART HIGH SCHOOL			Full High School	Part Nor- mal School	Full Nor- mal School	Part Col- lege	Full Col- lege	Special Train- ing	Un- known		
		1 year	2 years	3 years									
High Schools.....					7	12	13	9	35			81	12
Per Cent. of Total.....					8.6	14.8	16.1	11.1	43.2			100	
Elementary Schools													
Incorporated Districts...	3	8	18	55	57	5	26	12	4	1	1	190	40
Rural Districts.....	42	14	44	81	81	4	12	5	1		7	291	70
Total.....	45	22	62	136	138	9	38	17	5	1	8	481	110
Per Cent. of Total.....	9.3	4.6	12.9	28.3	28.7	1.9	7.9	3.5	1.0	0.2	1.7	100	
Colored Schools.....	2	5	1	11	28	2	36	3	1			89	14
Per Cent. of Total.....	2.2	5.6	1.1	12.4	31.5	2.2	40.5	3.4	1.1			100	
Grand Total.....	47	27	65	150	173	23	87	29	41	1	8	651	136

183 teachers missing.

183 teachers missing.

TABLE VII
AGES OF TEACHERS IN SERVICE, 1918-19

TEACHERS IN	AGES											Total
	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	Over 25	Un- known	
High Schools.....		1		3	5	8	4	4	5	51 ¹		81
Elementary Schools												
Incorporated Districts.....		7	9	15	10	17	16	12	8	94 ²	2	190
Rural Districts.....	8	33	36	32	33	16	15	10	14	93 ³	1	291
Total.....	8	40	45	47	43	33	31	22	22	187	3	481
Colored Schools.....	1	2	2	3	4	10	8	6	5	47 ⁴	1	89
Grand Total ⁵	9	43	47	53	52	51	43	32	32	285	4	651

¹The oldest high school teacher is fifty-seven years of age, and there are only 4 fifty years of age and over.

²The oldest teacher is seventy years of age, and there are only 13 fifty years of age and older.

³The oldest teacher is sixty-four years, and there are only 6 teachers fifty years of age and older.

⁴The oldest colored teacher is fifty-nine years of age, and there are only 4 fifty years of age and older.
⁵83 teachers missing.

TABLE VIII
YEARS OF SERVICE IN DELAWARE, 1918-19

TEACHERS IN	YEARS OF SERVICE								Total
	Less Than One Year	One Year	Two Years	Three Years	Four Years	Five Years	Over Five Years	Un- known	
High Schools.....	29	11	8	9	2	3	16	3	81
Elementary Schools									
Incorporated Districts.....	22	17	21	14	12	13	85	6	190
Rural Districts.....	91	40	32	14	17	12	77	8	291
Total.....	113	57	53	28	29	25	162	14	481
Colored Schools.....	18	9	5	7	6	10	30	4	89
Grand Total ¹	160	77	66	44	37	38	208	21	651

¹83 teachers missing.

TABLE IX
YEARS OF SERVICE IN PRESENT POSITION, 1918-19

TEACHERS IN	YEARS IN PRESENT POSITION							Total
	New	1 Year	2 Years	3 Years	4 Years	5 Years	Over 5 Years	Un- known
High Schools.....	40	16	9	3	2		9 ¹	2
Elementary Schools								
Incorporated Districts....	70	31	22	9	10	6	41 ²	1
Rural Districts.....	90	43	33	17	16	12	77 ²	3
Total.....	160	74	55	26	26	18	118	4
Colored Schools.....	45	19	4	4	4	3	9	1
Grand Total ⁴	245	109	68	33	32	21	136	7

¹The longest term of service in one position is 19 years; only 9 teachers have been in their present positions more than four years.

²The longest term of service in one position is 37 years; only 28 have been in their present positions ten years and longer.

³Forty-five teachers have been in their present positions from six to ten years; 30 teachers from eleven to twenty years; 10 teachers from twenty-one to thirty years; and 4 teachers from thirty-one to forty years.

⁴3 teachers missing.

Teachers in						Total
	\$220	\$225	\$230	\$245	Over \$250	
High Schools.....				2	3	74
Elementary Schools:						
Incorporated Districts						304
Rural Districts.....				1		311
Total.....				1		525
Colored Schools.....						21
Grand Total.....				3	3	599

This is exclusive of 8 men. Fifty-six teachers are retiring.



TABLE XI
ENROLLMENT BY AGES, 1917-18

KIND OF SCHOOL	AGES														TOTAL	
	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18 and over		Un-known
Incorporated Districts:	78	797	793	848	879	827	813	890	848	825	638	426	237	142	12	9,053
High Schools	78	797	793	848	879	827	813	885	786	62	354	301	205	131	5	1,306
Elementary Schools	179	952	1,053	1,125	1,148	1,186	1,061	1,068	864	743	284	125	32	11	7	7,747
Rural Schools	257	1,749	1,846	1,973	2,027	2,013	1,874	1,958	1,712	1,568	476	243	146	56	35	10,335
Total White											1,114	669	383	198	47	19,388
Colored Schools	74	318	364	378	423	418	380	469	388	353	240	169	63	30	39	4,106
Grand Total ¹	331	2,067	2,210	2,351	2,450	2,431	2,254	2,427	2,100	1,921	1,354	838	446	228	86	23,494

¹Exclusive of pupils of 11 white teachers and 10 colored teachers who did not report, an estimated total of 669.

TABLE XII
LENGTH OF COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE PERIOD IN WHITE DISTRICTS,
1917-18

KIND OF DISTRICT	NO. OF MONTHS IN COMPULSORY PERIOD						TOTAL
	3 Mos.	4 Mos.	5 Mos.	6 Mos.	7 Mos.	Un- known	
Incorporated	2	10	29	1	2		44
Rural.....	113	41	105	4	4	17	284
Total ¹	115	51	134	5	6	17	328

¹8 white districts missing.

108a

Co
Dr

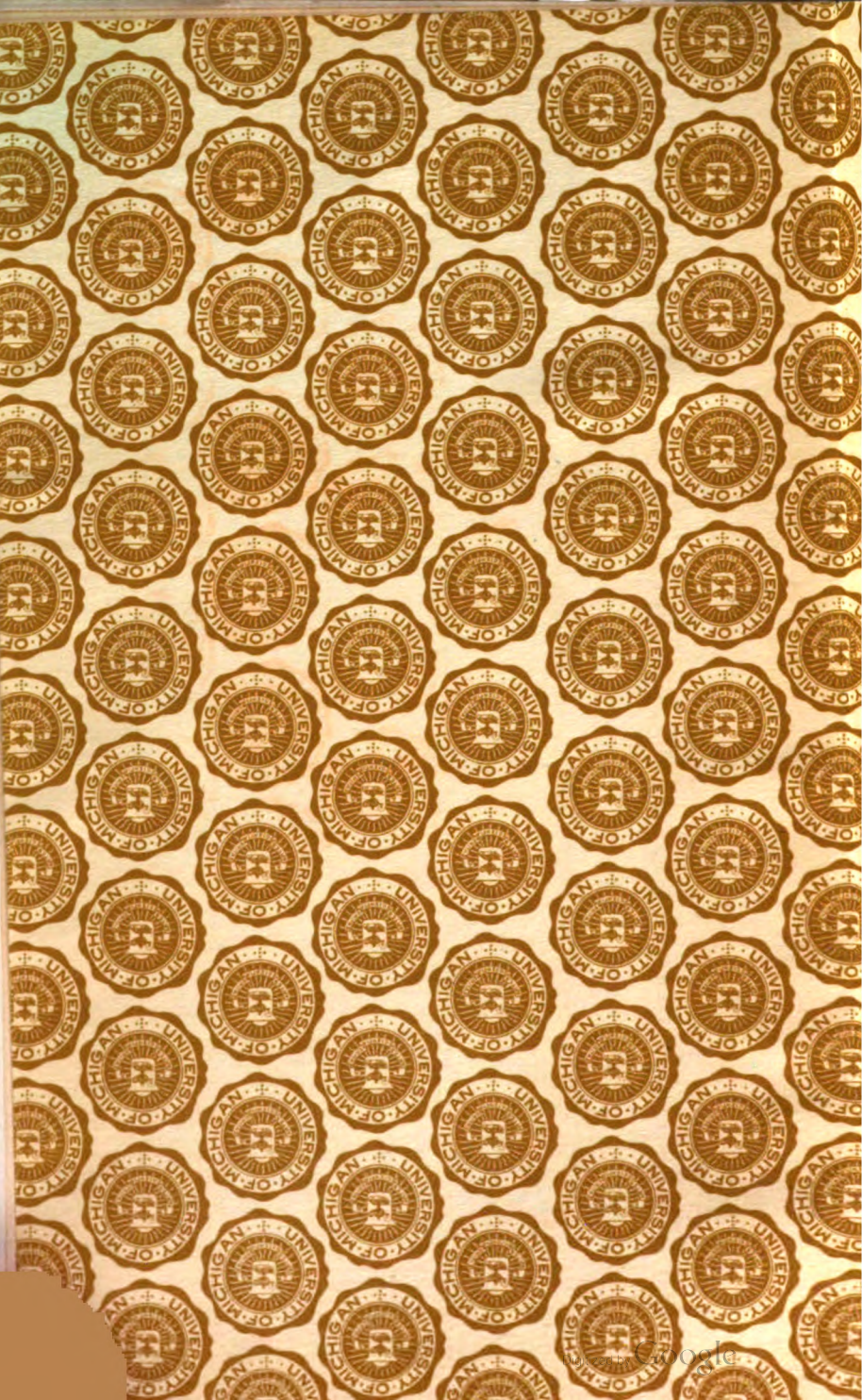
New Castle...
Incorporated...
Rural...
Colored...

Kent...
Incorporated...
Rural...
Colored...

Sussex...
Incorporated...
Rural...
Colored...

State...
Incorporated...
Rural...
Colored...

¹In the case





3 9015 06272 8475

LA

253

935

Genl Educa. Bol

Pub. Ed. in

Delaware

W. E. Lantz 1348

Mr. Phineas M. Hill
1103 St. ...

1103 Σ

H. Hansen
600

608 Washington
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